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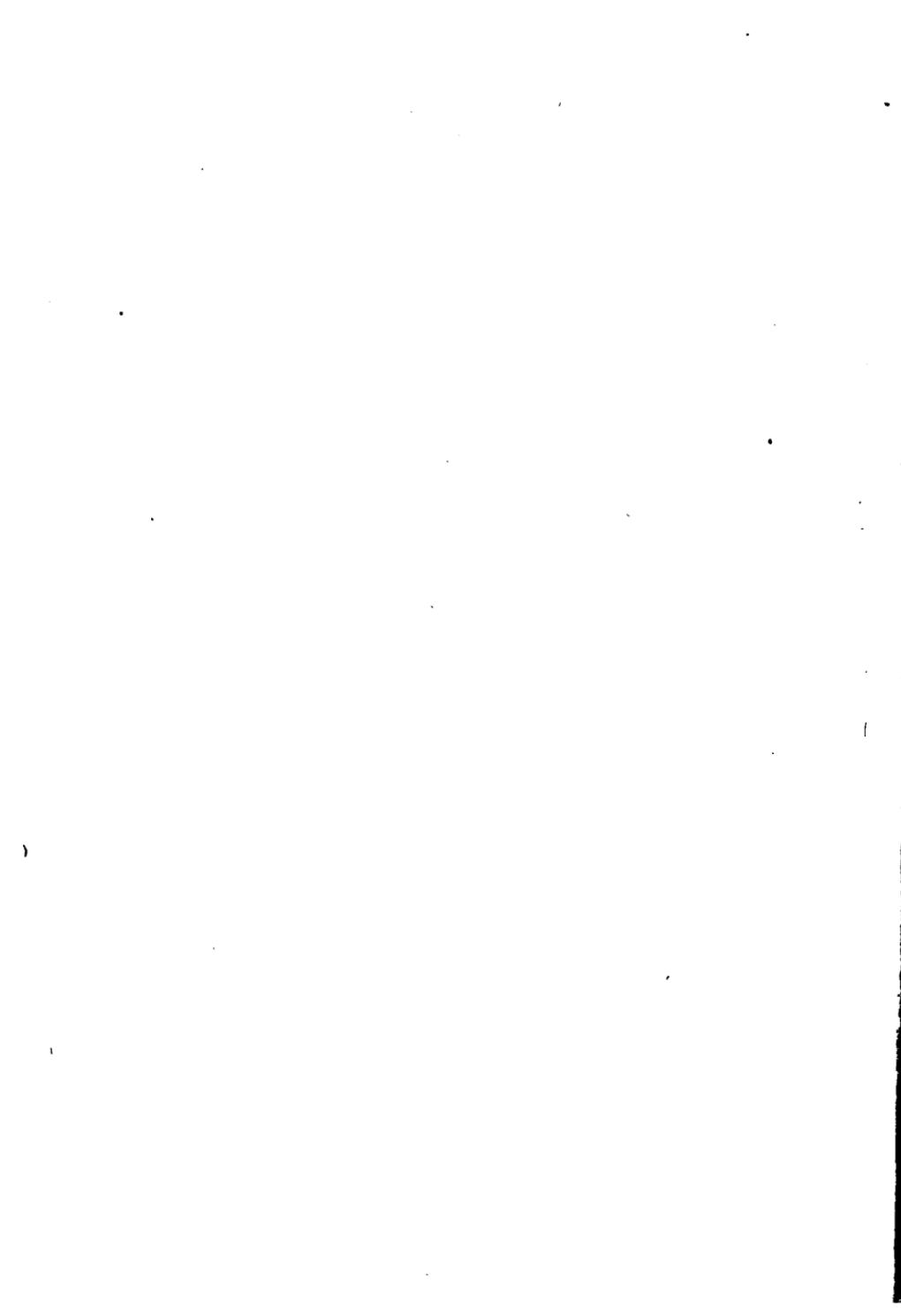
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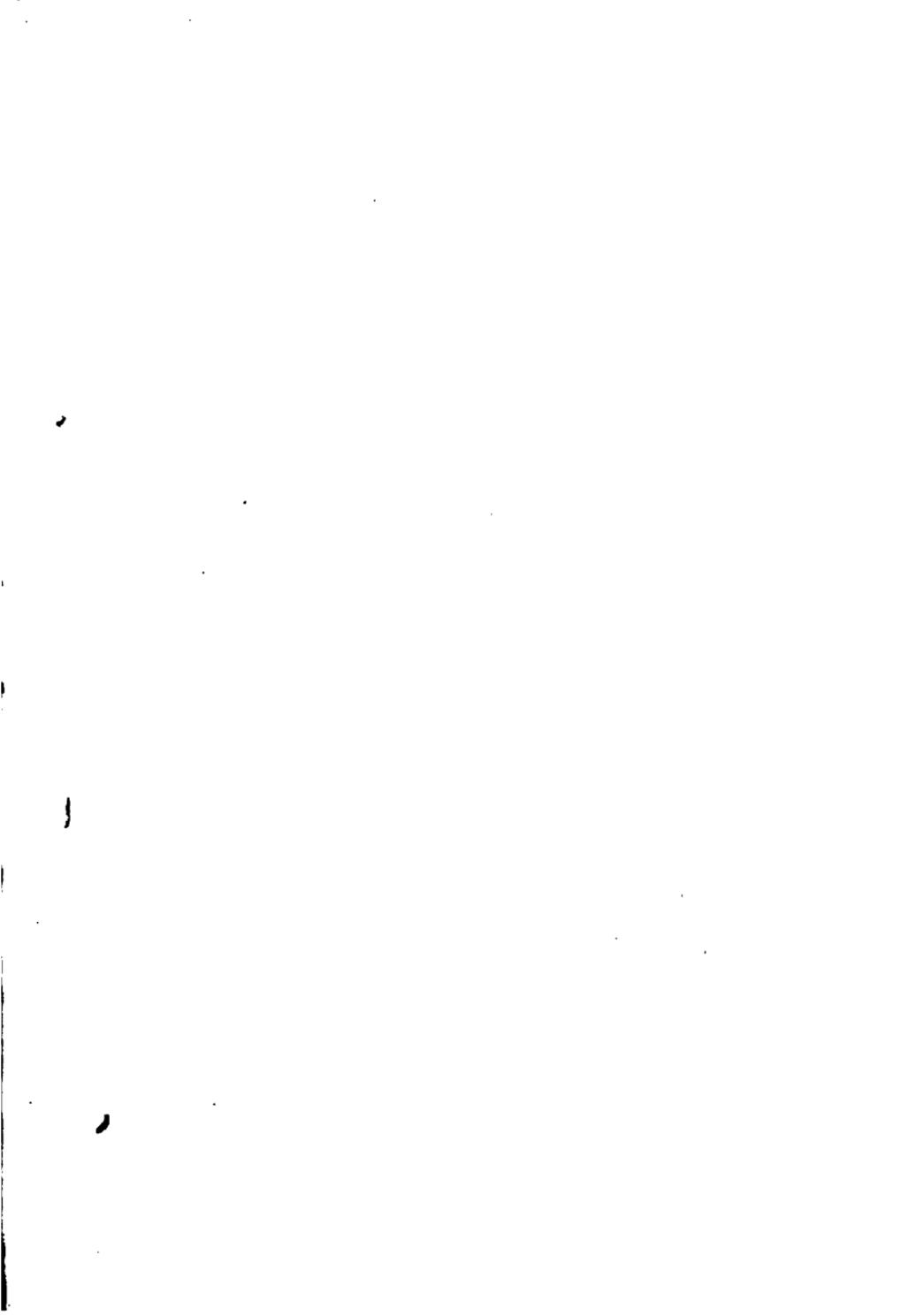
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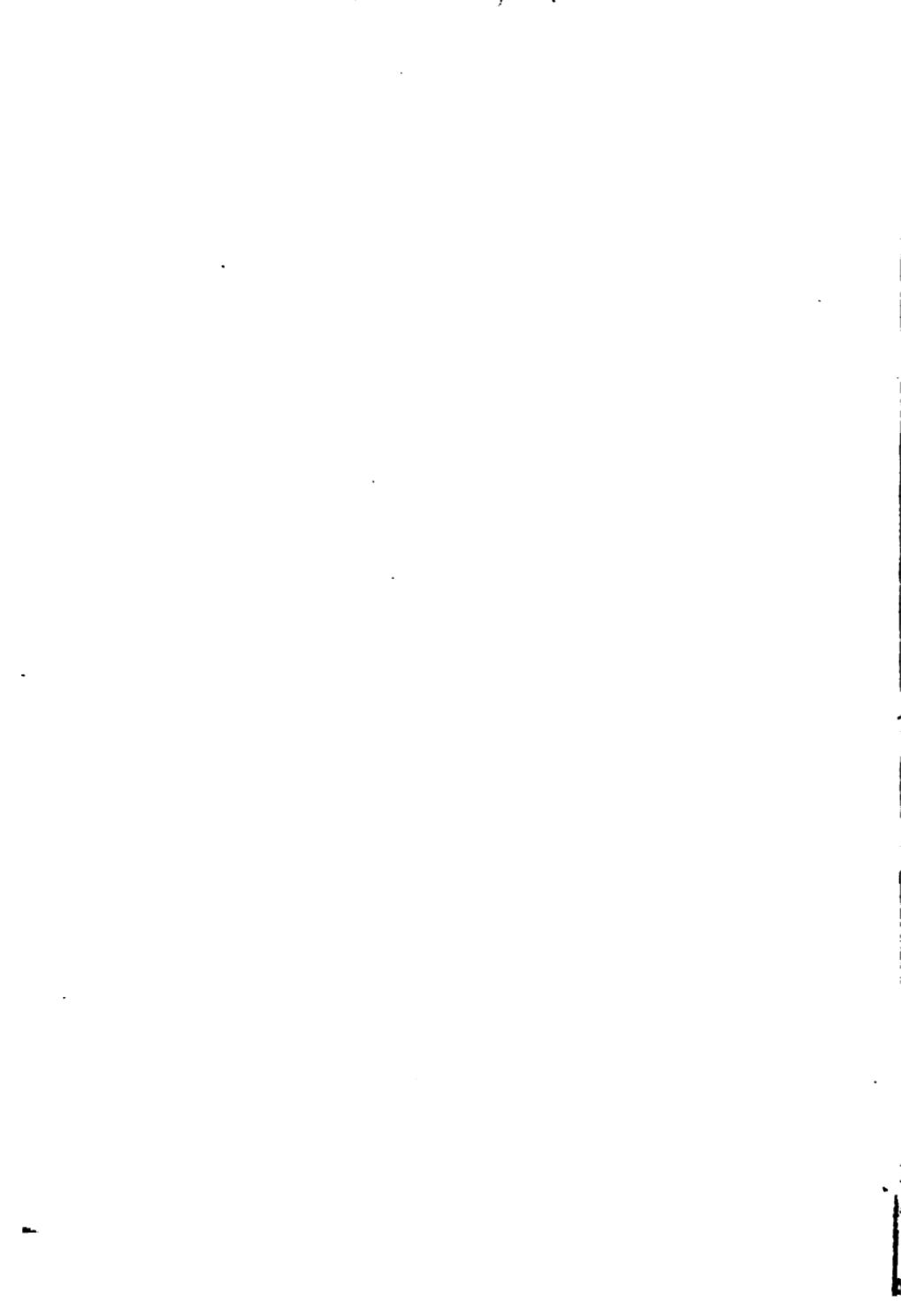


NBI

Spence







A RAPE OF HALLOWE'EN

HENRY PERCIVAL SPENCER

Author of
"The Haunted House"
"The Lilies"



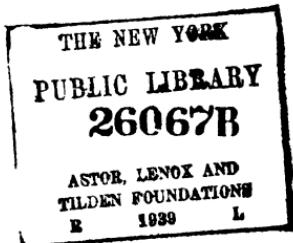
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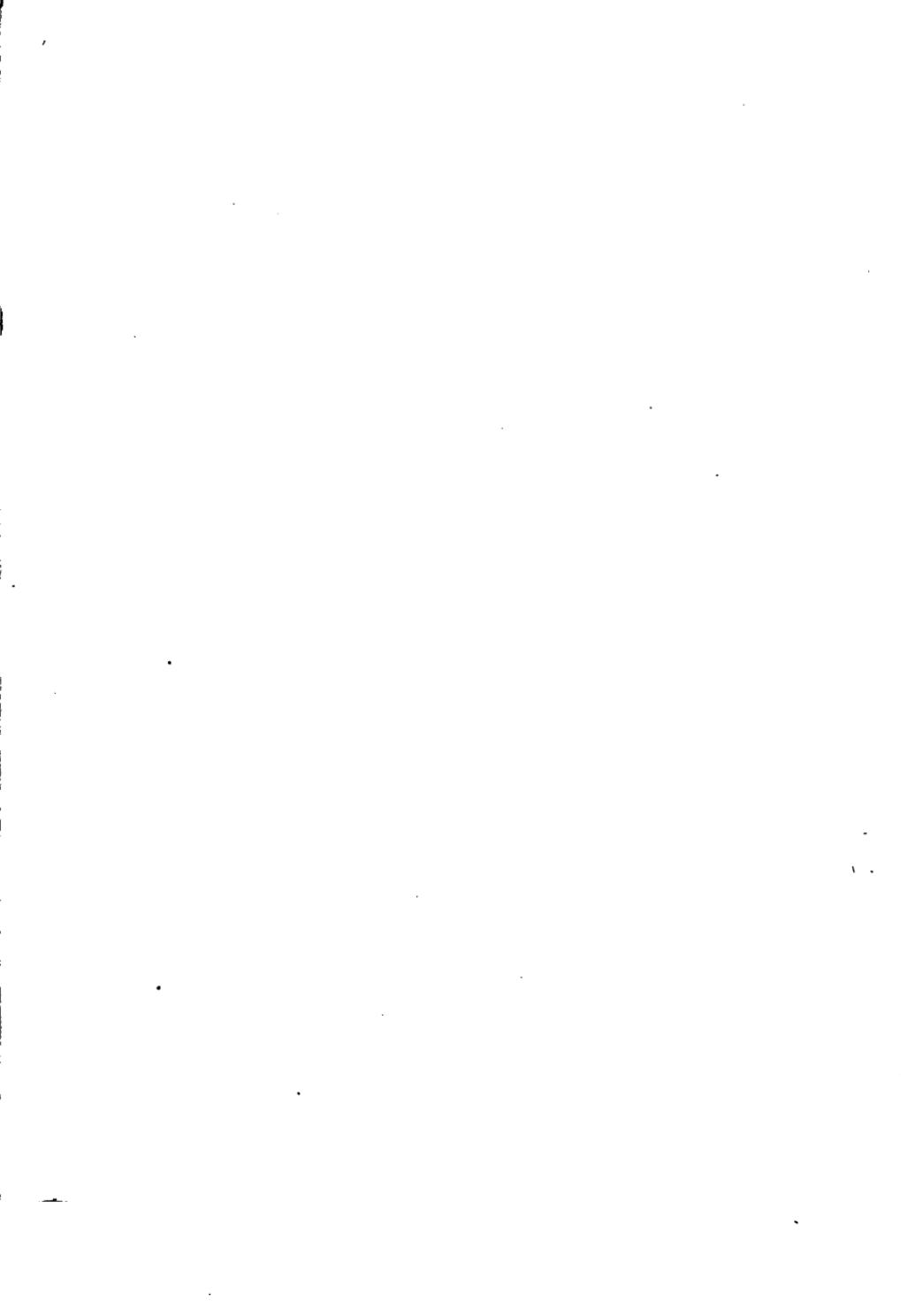
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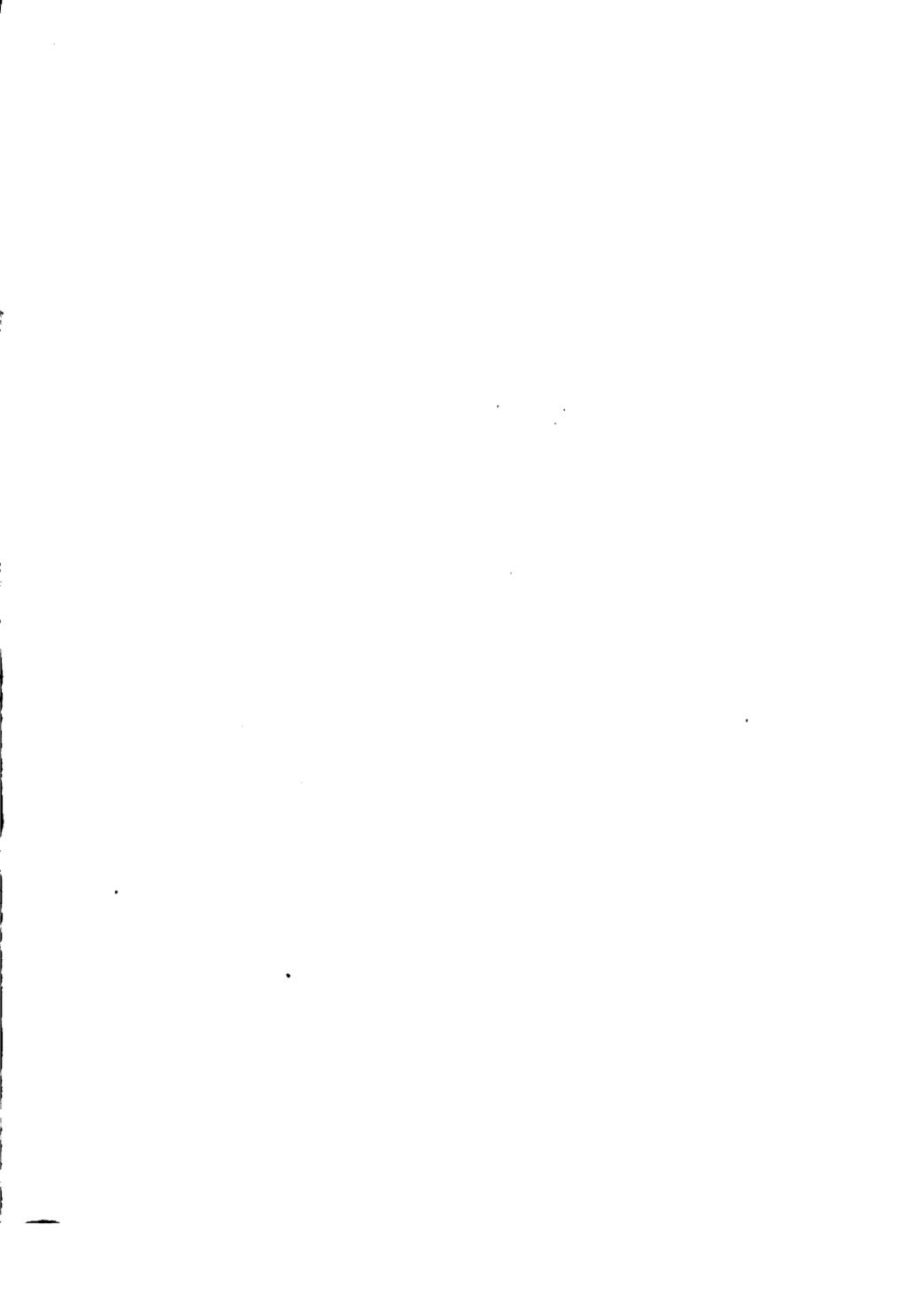
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*Go, little book
Of Poetry!
Search nook and crook of land and sea.
And some will praise,
And some condemn;
But go your ways in spite of them.
For if you tune
As others say,
You soon, too soon, are thrown away!*

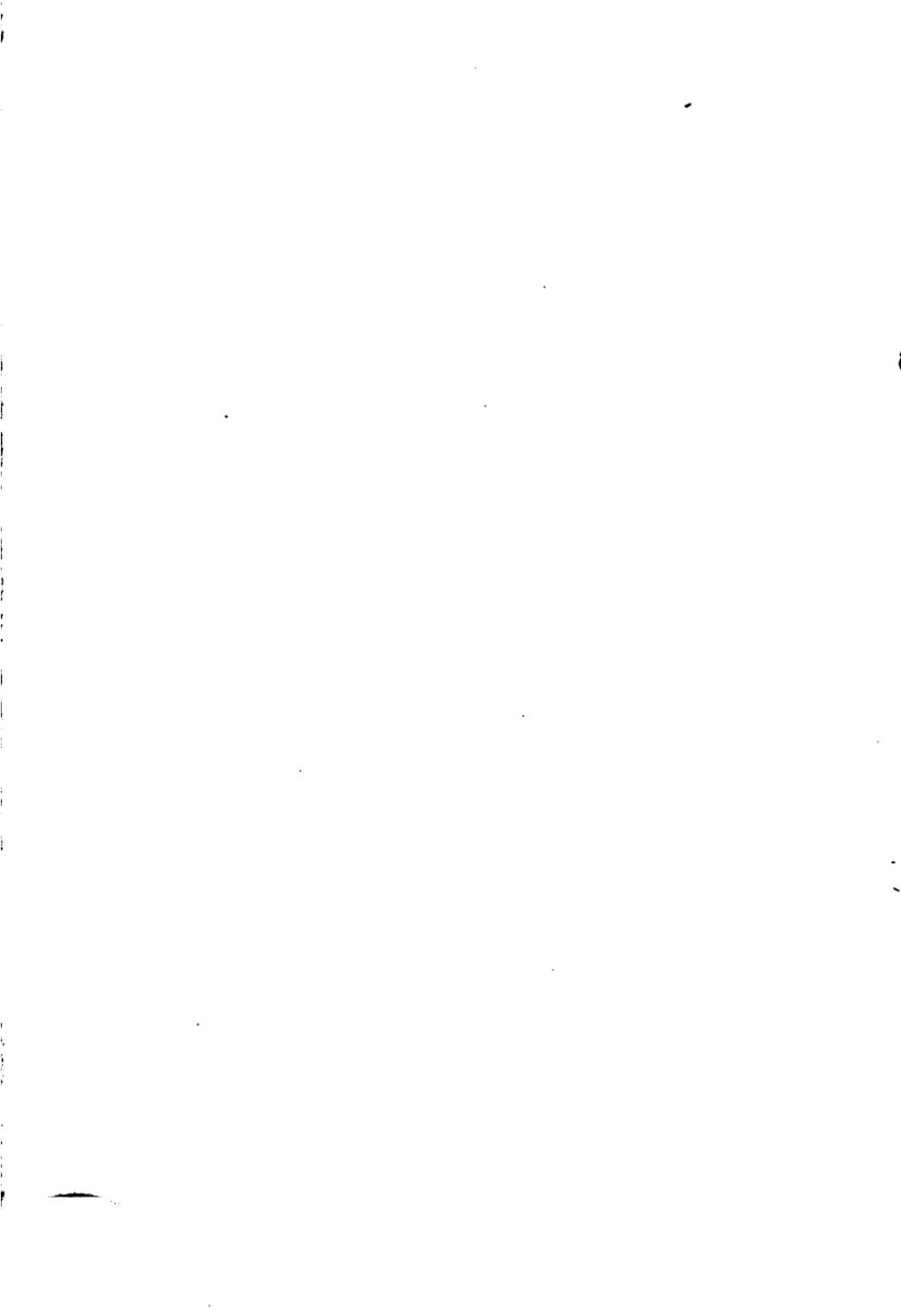


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A Rape of Hallowe'en



A RAPE OF HALLOWE'EN

I

'Tis Hallowe'en, the Summer leaves are dead!
The timid frost and dew are now at strife;
The side-hill flowers are in their Winter's bed,
And all the land with solemn joy is rife.
The ripened days of the departing year
Upon the land have laid their somber pall!
The days when few birds sing and dead limbs fall,
And in each smile of joy there lingereth a tear.

II

The castle vine hath withered; the red rose
Is but a memory! And yet the days
Are fragrant. . . . Who hath spoke of Winter
snows?
And who hath come and whispered cunning lays
Into the woodland's ear? Ah! few who know
Or dream of half the knowledge which is borne
By littly winds, that creep from rock to thorn,
And whisper, whisper, whisper, as they sweetly
blow.

III

The day is waned; the shades of eventide
Enwrap the heathered hills in purple hue.
Ramona holds a flower, pressed and dried,—
A May-day gift, which oft she kisses, too,
And murmurs loving words in purlèd tone,
As if it understood the gentle sighs
Which cause her bodice so to fall and rise
As a frail bud, from which the bee is lately flown.

IV

She hears not jest and laughter in the hall;
The noisy scullions at their evening tasks;

The shepherd's halloo! and the watchman's call;
The broaching of the Baron's mighty casks:—
She listens to the vesper's mellow tune,
Which sends its pensive melodies afar;
She watches for the round, white evening star,
And waits the rising of the late October moon.

V

And oft she gazes on the circling moat,
Where once the water lily grew, and now
The tawny weed and rushes idly float,
For sweetest, purest things soonest allow
The ravisher's foul touch. O! guard thee well,
Fair lady, lest thy innocence should prove
The open portal of thy virgin love,
And that most prized should alter and become
most fell!

VI

A gem of youth and beauty!—From the tower
She leans afar and welcomes the cool night!
Her bosom flutters with unventured power,
Her mind is filled with visions of delight.
O holiest hour to mortal man made known—
Soft eventide!—how can't thou be extolled!
What mind so crabbed or what breast so cold,
But feels thy tenderness and love, when day is
flown.

VII

And now the dark, the night, the evening meal,
Where all are merry, and the fatted Priest
Has filled a kindly bumper to her weal
And clucks his lips at sight of goodly feast.
He fills his cup again, and yet again!
And gazes on Ramona, seated by,

With thoughts unholy and salacious eye,
For robe their bodies as they will, men are but
men.

VIII

He knows not what is swelling in her thought;
How Nature, in maturing her each year,
Had in her heart a great rebellion wrought,
And found new pleasures for her eye and ear,
Other than chasing sun beams of the skies,
Or trembling at the nurse's goblin tale,
Or list'ning to the aged (warmed with ale)
Buzzing their gossip like so many idle flies.

IX

Old men forget the April throes of youth,
Its longings and its vagrancy of mind—
And moody hours; and have no ruth
For those who can not joy and profit find
In game of tricky cards or foreign news.
In dotage, they forget that once they grew
As any lad or lass,—or I, or you,
And youths' exuberance and sins they'll not
excuse.

X

So, in their stubbornness, oft drive youth on
To do, what otherwise, youth would not do.
What they deny youths' eyes, youth looks upon
In secret; for, tho' much we may subdue,
The mind is ever free to roam at will,
And as a colt goes skipping here and there,—
And, like a hawk, espies the smallest snare
To end its freedom of the lonely marsh and hill.

XI

That, most condemned by soured senility,
Is, by that condemnation, magnified,
Till it becomes what youths most wish to see
And dream of—and will not be denied!
For youth is stubborn in its ignorance,
And will not heed the words of squally age,
But must be snooping in each (well read) page
To read what is forbid with utmost diligence.

XII

At such times, girls are ripe for great adventure!
Thrice lucky and thrice favored is the maid
Who finds in that, which all are apt to censure,
A soothing balm and yet, is not betrayed.
And now Ramona, stinging with Love's fire,
Can neither stand nor sit nor eat nor sleep;
But far—so far away—her wild thoughts creep,
That she heeds not the questions of her wrinkled
sire.

XIII

And now she gazes on the logs of flame
Which crackle on the hearth. A listless daughter,
She does not help the children in their game,
Who bob for apples round a tub of water.
She moves apart from all the merry throng,
And only seems to start from revery
When called upon to tune her harp, which she
Soon does, and forthwith sings an old time
Lover's song.

XIV

Visions of Love her every thought engross;
While in her heart Love's red rose germinates,
Which blossom will, in her white velvet bosz,
When he has come for whom she longing waits:

A restlessness has seized her every bone,
By day she feels it roving, long the streams—
At night it comes to her with varied dreams,
And she knows not from girl to woman she has
grown.

XV

Anxiously she'd waited Hallowe'en,
Longing for her young Lover of the wars;
And hoped that he would come, and would be seen
When midnight flowers twinkled in the stars.
And now the day was swallowed in night's maw,
A night to stroll the sweetest paths of life,
Known but to the new wedded man and wife,
When lips scarce dare to kiss from tenderness
and awe.

XVI

So pass the hours until the curfew bell
Proclaims the time for sleep to be at hand.
Ramona seeks her chamber, 'bout her fell
Long ringlets, far below her girdle band.
The night has come!—and sweet Ramona lies
With many a wasted blush upon her cheeks,
And many a thought, unworded, bashfully speaks
From out the morbid depth of her dark fringed eyes.

XVII

And there she lies! . . Her swelling breasts
like fruit
Which scarce is ripe, tho' large and firm and
round!
And there she lies!—all teachings to refute,
Mid that silken aroma, which is found
Where luscious maids inhabit, and which vies
With rarest of narcotics. Dark her eyes,

And white and hard her shoulders, arms and
thighs,
And there alone, and waiting for her Love,—she
lies.

XVIII

And there she lies!—so young, so beautiful!
Able to give what men are murdered for!
Is it unnatural, strange, or wonderful,
This palpitating flesh could lead to war,
And theft, and suicide—and all of sin,
Or all of Paradise (if Love be true)!
When minds are wrought to fury by the view
And touch of nudity, if robed in beauty's skin?

XIX

And there she lies . . . One arm across her face,
And one upon her breast, she waits the hour
Of everlasting joy—or of disgrace;
And vows unto herself she will not cower,
But allow her young true Lover do his wish
Upon her body, nor his will impugn,
Butnidulent within his arms—to swoon!
And taste the rarest dainties of Love's savory
dish.

XX

And all is silent in the moated castle;
And not a sound but wind among the trees.
Sound sleep hath conquered all with wine and
wassail,
While, like the constant beating of the seas
Upon the rocks, her heart resounds each beat;
And through each vein her blood bubbles and
skips;
Blanchèd has grown her face and neck and lips,
Lest in the dark some beast or spirit she should
meet.

XXI

What subtle incense wafts its odors sweet,
And charms the very hound, who oft would prick
His ears at sounds—for such an hour—unmeet,
And howl at the least cracking of a stick?
For now he lies as dead—nose to the fire,
That spouts and flickers, casting shadows here
And there, causing things quickly to appear
And vanish, as the flames leap forth and then
expire.

XXII

At last the midnight hour! . . . And without,
The pallid moonbeams fall upon each rill;
The screech owl flies the tower twice about,
And mocks his own harsh echo; wood and hill
Are wrapped in slumber, save where fairies
bright
And knavish elves sport in the open glades,
While some make pretty music on the blades
Of dew-wet grass which sparkles in the humid
light.

XXIII

It is the midnight hour! All within,
Are deep a dreaming save Ramona; she,
(Herself an elf-child) hears the merry din
And glides from out her warm couch silently.
Her robes of sleep, unclasped, fall to the floor
In white confusion, and the moon alone,
Looks on her loveliness, a moment shown,
As a pink lily ere night petals close it o'er.

XXIV

Deep in the forest where the bubbling springs
Gush o'er the green-mossed pebbles to the lake,

And where the brooding pine tree ever sings,—
The water nymphs from rosy sleep awake,
And sing upon the waves their magic song;
Their hair all dripping with the night-mists pale,
That ghost-like fluctuate from mount to vale,
And creep, creep silently the slumbering hills
along.

XXV

It is the night of vigil—Halloweve!
When blushing maidens seek, with bogey aid,
A knowledge of their Lovers; and they weave
Fantastic flowers in their scented braid,
And have their fortunes told and play at games,
And whisper ghostly tales, and romp about,
And talk of Love, and buss and laugh and shout,
Unhampered by the aged men and kindly dames.

XXVI

Again the screech owl sends his squalid tune
Across the meadows, where the witches dance
Their Autumn dance beneath the serious moon,
Whose light enwraps the world in mellow trance.
Ramona dons her robes in anxious haste;
Her trembling hands war with each stubborn
lace,
Impatient glances dart along her face,
For every moment seems an hour gone to waste.

XXVII

Now here now there, her fingers swiftly glide;
Now this now that, has fallen to the floor;
Now this unlaced, now this unhooked, beside,
—Now all's apart!—now she begins once more.
Now she grows red, now she grows white, and
turns

Herself before a mirror, side from side,
Till all is done, and her door opens wide,
And she peers down the hall, where one, lone
taper burns.

XXVIII

And now she goes!—quick, sylvan-like and tall;
A spectral vision in a mantle white.
Dust-coated relics hang upon the wall,
She neither turns her to the left nor right,
But ever nears the tower stairs. Dark gloom
Makes ugly shadows, with the yellow light
That flickers here and there. O holy sight!
Like some white phantom risen from an ancient
tomb!

XXIX

One hand upholds her dress, and one the glass,
As backward step by step she swift descends.
By tower door and window she must pass,
And many a warpèd step, which creaks and bends
With sound uncanny, ere she reach the hall.
With frightened lips she murmurs a faint prayer,
A lucid halo plays about her hair,
On which the grating's light and dusky shadows
fall.

XXX

Charms of the night fill her with fantasies;
Again she murmurs, her round bosom heaves
With strange turmoil, and her wide open eyes
Look to the glass, wond'ring if it deceives
Her heart: yet ever downward does she move
With lissom steps and in such neatness dressed,
That with each stir her beauty may be guessed,
And the soft rustlings seem little songs of love.

XXXI

Gray spider webs wave from each dusty rafter,
And on the walls hang thread-bare tapestries:
Down—down she moves, her shadow following
after!

Abashed, persistent, thrilled!—yet ill at ease,
Lest some dwarf'd sorcerer should come, and
waft her

Away! . . . Now eager, now she hesitates,
And now she falters, listens, and awaits,
And hears, once more, and from afar, the brown
owl's laughter.

XXXII

At last with catching breath, she stops and stands
On the last stair. A tear of sharp regret
Floats to her eyes and drops upon her hands:
She gazes down with silken lashes wet,
She knows not where to turn, to stay or go!
Yet now, as if to hatch the occult aid
Of mystic Hallowe'en, this witchéd maid
Once more has raised the glass, and looks for
weal or woe.

XXXIII

And there, reflected on the walls of stone,
She spys a figure—mute and motionless!
Is it the Banshee! . . . Stifling a groan,
Ramona shakes with terror. Poignant stress
Runs down her bones, her body vacillates
To see a shadow standing at her side
(With nodding plumes who claims her as his
bride,)
All clothed in silver cloth that waves and
scintillates.

XXXIV

Is it a mockery—a vapory spright
Which near her stands? No, see!—she starts,
she bends!

Her eyes are fixed upon the mirror's light;
One arm, unconsciously, she now extends,
And he is there!—and leans above her face;
While half supported by his ready arm,
And all amaze, she yields her to his charm:
The vow is spoke—he whispers—bends,—their
lips embrace!

XXXV

O sweet, sweet kiss!—the kiss of Love's young
years!

The kiss that wakes the latent soul to burn
With a new heat, and every fiber sears!
And makes Love's untaught heart eager to learn.
Ramona, weak with joy, hangs on his breast,
And slowly round his neck her fingers creep;
Her Lover (through whose mind wild passions
sweep)

Vows all the bliss with which perennial love is
blest!

XXXVI

And so they stand! as Lovers have for ages;
Their bodies strained within each other's arms!
With eyes half closed and lips to lips, Love
rages

Through every sinew, causing strange alarms,
Till he himself must of his kisses tire;
For none can long withstand so ripe a kiss,
And crush such Venic loveliness as this,
And not grow mad with torture of delayed desire!

XXXVII

Deftly he lifts her in his strong young arms
And step by step ascends the crooked stair;
Her arms are 'bout his neck, her bosom warms
His straining breast: a prize so young and fair
Is seldom won....Her chamber door agape,
He slips within and lays her on her bed,
And kneels beside her; while her face (o'er spread
With blushes) she has buried in the pillow's lap.

XXXVIII

She dare not scream (she would not if she durst);
Far more she fears the Baron's cruel eye,
Than such caresses of neoteric thirst;
Yet with his wishes she will not comply,
But pushes him away in high disdain,
And whispers to him that he must be gone
Ere she cry loud for succor, or the dawn
Discover them to all, and they be swiftly slain.

XXXIX

"O hurry, hurry Love," he whispers to her,
"Let not the sun preen out his fiery wings
And find thee still a maid." And then, to woo
her,
He pleads and promises most silly things;
And forcing up her face, kisses her lips,
Till they grow moist with yearning. Yet she
cries
And begs a week—a day! with tearful eyes,
And tightly winds her robes about her feet and
hips.

XL

And is it ever thus; and must they feign,
And so contrive their wishes to accomplish
And still appear reluctant, to retain

Fictitious modesty, and seem in anguish
When most in Paradise!.... Woman is vexing!
Complex,—yet simple and diaphanous
(When partiality does not engulf us);
Though wise men all have writ that she is most
perplexing!

XLI

Or are they timid at the crucial point,
And honestly in fear,—as a loud vaunter
Who, with his words and acts, invites a joint,
Yet flies at the first sign of an encounter?
For those who lure the most with look and gesture,
Are mostly apt to run when hedged in;
And those whose soul is cankerous with sin,
Oil every guilt with meekness and with holy
vesture.

XLII

She will not hear his vows, she will not speak;
She lies as dead save when, upon her brow,
She feels his mouth—and on her neck and cheek,
And strives to rise, which he will not allow.
And now she scolds, forbidding him to woo;
But he, persistent, her mandates evade,
And toys with her the more,—and O! what maid
Can conquer both her Lover and her passions,
too?

XLIII

“O Love, sweet Love, have I not wooed thee long,
Have we not played together hand in hand?
Did I not sing thee many a Lover’s song,
Which, tho’ a scoffing, thou did’st understand?
Is there within me anything to find
Unworthy or repellent to thy sight?
O come, my Love, too short—too short the night!
Come, kiss me, Sweet, and be more womanly and
kind.

XLIV

“Art thou not seasoned for the nuptial couch?
Art thou not fashioned for Love’s votary?
If not! then who for Nature’s art will vouch,
If Nature thus can prove a chouse in thee!
Art not in mind and body consummate?
Thy breasts are bursting with their melting dew!
O come, my Love, thy timorousness eschew,
The sleepless hours of Love’s deliriousness await!

XLV

“O tell me what is life? Is it to live,—
To shun what others offer, and to die!
And dying nothing take and nothing give?
The midnight hour’s past, the moments fly!
O Love, sweet Love, I pray thee be more kind;
Take me unto thyself and to thy bed”—
(And here he kissed her to a burning red)
“Banish all silly fears from thy virginal mind.”

XLVI

It is as if they play a game of chess;
On all his moves is put her instant ban,
For she, with counter moves of craftiness,
Checks him at once,—move where he will or can!
‘Tis well excitement gives them not a pause,
Lest she suspects he knows too well his art,—
Lest he imagines that she acts a part
And with her unpropitiousness smothers her
claws.

XLVII

And so they war; a comic war it is!
The fort is held by Mistress Modesty;
The part to martial strength and storm!—is his,
And well he battles with Virginity.

Now he retreats, and now he makes attack;
Maneuvering with such undaunted skill,
That soon, I fear, despite her stubborn will,
He will invade the Fort, and rob and burn and
sack!

XLVIII

For Love must win or else this world were bare,
And Love requires, often, to be bold;
And frowns and execrations Love must dare
If, in Love's arms, a Virgin Love should hold—
And bitter speech! By these, so little meant,
Girls do unwilling what they'd willing do,
And scorn the man who does not dare to woo,
Whatever they may do,—however they lament!

XLIX

And now Ramona's Lover, piece by piece,
Has forced her of her raiment, and his own.
His gentle touch and words he does not cease,
Till unto her Love's secrets he has shown . . .
. . . And now 'tis done! . . . But many a
struggle vain,
He has surmounted!—Many a feigned cry,
For succor, his hand stifled wilfully!
And now the silent tears run down her cheeks
like rain.

L

But such bright tears are very soon run dry!
Such struggles come to end with Virtue's fall.
Unwilling with Love's measures to comply,
Now she's unwilling Love should end at all;
And begs of him that he will not away!
. . . Erst praying him he would her lips release,
Now she is fearful lest his kisses cease,—
And round his neck entwines her arms and tells
him stay!

LI

Sing!—Sing! sweet Muse, of Love in all its
glory!

Tell why it is a Lover may not rest:
Now that she has perused Love's sacred story,
A famished flower is wakened in her breast!
He may not sleep; for she, awake the night,
Cajoles and kisses him,—more mad than sane,
And lures from him again and yet again
All that which erst had made her tremulous
with fright!

LII

And now they laugh and whisper, kiss and chide;
The while he makes her swear and swear again
(While thus they lie entangled side by side),
That he was first to bring such honeyed pain:
For true Love's jealous, and is not content
With that which others leave as nibbled fruit;
Demanding what is spotless from all loot,
And is to Love the first and the last sacrament.

LIII

Sleep does not enter where two Lovers lie
On violet-blunted thorns! . . . Only the croon
Of the night breeze; the star's propitious eye,
And poppyed thoughts, and the majestic moon!
While Caution hies away in angry scorn,
Conscience is strangled by Felicity!
And Weariness is fled across the lea
To hide until the gates are open for the Morn.

LIV

O happy, happy Love! Of thee I sing!
Let others chant of Love's dramatic sorrow,
And cheapen all the pleasures Love may bring;
And from their fancies, pain and misery borrow,

To intimidate the weaklings with their arts :
As if Love were not good and full of bliss,—
As if 'twere wrong to woo and play and kiss,—
As if Nature had blundered when She made our
hearts !

LV

But joy can never last the whole night through,
And ere the dawn our Lover must away !
Lest the old Baron and his train pursue,
And if they gave him chase it were to slay.
Tho' with Ramona he can not delay,
Yet does he wait and blushes stupidly,
Lest she should see him leaving hastily,
And mock at him that he no longer cared to stay.

LVI

But she, sweet Bride, was bashful, too, it seems,
And to herself prayed that he might be gone
Before the Heavens shed their curious beams
Upon the casement where the curtains, drawn,
Let in the star-light and the breeze, and so,
He could look on her as she naked lay,
And laugh at her and all her amorous play,—
So she implores him that he will make haste
and go !

LVII

He rises from the couch of their caresses—
That mystical, magnetic, wond'rous bed !
Yet once his lips to hers he softly presses,
The while she clings to him in fear and dread,
Tearful that he departs ; and half in shame,
To hide her beauty of the full blown rose ;
And round about are strewn their scented clothes,
Where he had flung them in the madness of
his flame.

LVIII

At last they part with many kisses sweet,
And many promises for nights ensuing.
And many nights hereafter do they meet,
And not till death will they grow tired of wooing.
Thrice happy are they in each others joy;
She, that her Lover is so young and brave;
He, that she gives what n'er before she gave!
O happy, happy girl! And happy, happy boy!

LIX

And he is gone! . . . Ah! no, he now returns.
She tells him to be gone, yet calls him back;
The soul of each with parting sorrow burns,—
Their thirst so deep no drink of Love will slack.
How cruel the day which steals by wood and
lawn,
And tears true hearts asunder, and comes spy-
ing,
But hurry, fond, young, boy,—thou must be
flying.
Once more he kisses her, and turns—and he is
gone!

LX

And now the dawn has come, while far away
He rides at leisure, singing as he rides;
O welcome, welcome each and every ray
Of light, upon the vales and mountain sides.
And in her room Ramona kneels in prayer,
Her thoughts more on her Lover than her soul,
Her locks, unloosened, from her shoulders roll,
Her ravished breast—but let us leave her
kneeling there.

1.

The world is but a dizzy sphere,
The stars are shining, oh! so near,
The mountains and the Heavens meet,
And all things move on fairy feet,
The zephyrs play in wild delight,—
For I am mad, am mad, am mad!
For I am mad with joy to-night.

The moon laughs, and the whippoorwill
Pipes gaily from the wooded hill;
The brooks and rushes kiss and kiss,
The dew falls in a realm of bliss
Within a rose's breast so bright,—
And I am mad, am mad, am mad;
And I am mad with joy to-night!

The Heavens smile, the night birds sing!
The whole, wide world is in the Spring!
And all my tears are happy tears,
And all my fears are happy fears,
And oh! my heart is light—so light.—
And I am mad, am mad, am mad,
And I am mad with joy to-night!

For my sweet Love, my lovely Love,
Kissed me! And trembling as the dove,
Showed me her heart,—it beat for me,
It beat and bled alone for me!
And oh! how high my fancy's flight,—
So I am mad, am mad with love,
So I am mad with joy to-night!

2.

Have you ever been up to Malone——Malone,
Have you ever been up to Malone,
Where little French misses
Are lavish with kisses,
Up North, in the town of Malone?

If you haven't, then go to Malone——Malone,
If you haven't, then go to Malone;
At the time of the fair,
When the people are there,
And there's plenty of fun in Malone.

There's Irish and Scotch in Malone——Malone,
There's English and Swede in Malone;
But when Love is the test,
Then the French are the best!
And there's lots to be found in Malone!

But be circumspect in Malone——Malone,
Dont drink the "Red Eye" of Malone;
Or else you might tarry,
And—well, perhaps marry!
And that wouldn't do in Malone.

3.

"O one hath journeyed to the wars,
And one rots in his cell;
For one the Priest hath said his prayer,
And tolls the bell."

And thus she sings and tells her beads,
And hides her from the light;
And thus she moans her threnody
Through all the night.

She lurks beneath the jutting crags,
Or wanders in the meads,
And ever sings her mournful strain,
And tells her beads.

The rain falls all about her ears,
And mats her dripping hair,
And still she tells her rusty beads
And hums this air,—

“O one hath journeyed to the wars,
And one rots in his cell;
For one the Priest hath said his prayer
And tolls the bell.”

4.

O you will weep no more, my Love,
And you will sigh no more,
When I have crossed the sea, my Love,
And go to yonder shore.

We'll dwell beside the running brook,
Beneath the trees and skies;
And you will read a Lover's book,
And I shall read your eyes.

Our bed shall be of softest down,
Our home our willful pleasure,
And we shall drink of love, my Love,
Nor stinted be our measure.

The birds shall wake us in the morn,
The pines lull us to rest,
The wind will bend the rustling corn
And rock the pendent nest.

The rose will blossom red and white,
And violets all of blue,
The posies,—pansies—left and right,
Will live alone for you!

So weep and sigh no more, my Love,
So weep and sigh no more,
For we shall live to love, my Love,
When I have crossed the shore!

5.

Sing Hi! Ho!—Sing Hi! Ho!
For the buxom, bonny lass,
Who teaches us the vespers
Which are chanted in the grass,
While good Protestants are snoring
And good Cath'lics are at mass,—
O sing Hi! Ho!—Sing Hi! Ho! for such a merry
lass!

Sing Hi! Ho!—Sing Hi! Ho!
For the merry making maid
Who likes the taste of liquor,
And of kissing's not afraid;
Be she wife or lass or widow,
She's an ever welcome jade,—
O sing Hi! Ho!—Sing Hi! Ho! for such a bonny
maid!

Sing Hi! Ho!—Sing Hi! Ho!
For Molly, Liz, or Ann!
Whatever be their failings
Or their virtues or their clan,
So long as they are human
And do love their fellow man,—
O sing Hi! Ho!—Sing Hi! Ho! for Molly, Liz,
or Ann!

6.

I love to lie upon the grass
Beneath the apple boughs, in May,
Nor count the hours as they pass,
But gaze on distant hills away!

And thus to dream!—forever dream!
And hear the tipup's scattered notes,
The trout a jumping from the stream,
And watch the passing of the boats.

To smoke a cigarette or two,
And feel that I'm a single man,
And know I've nothing else to do
But smoke and read and dream and plan.

To hold a book of poetry,
And at my elbow, jug and glass,
The bright blue Heavens over me—
And I a-dreaming in the grass!

7.

O gentle, gentle wind of June,
A-blowing through the trees,
Bring not from yonder singing wood
Forgotten melodies.

For so ye blew and so ye sang
When all the world was young;
A melody that once you sing,
Can never more be sung.

And every bird was singing, too,
And flowers were all ablow;

**They tuned their music to a song
Which only Lovers know.**

**But Northern blasts came swift and soon,
And every bird was flown,
And every flower died with frost—
While I was left alone!**

8.

**When war is war! and the cannon roar,
And sabres gleam in the murky light,
And bullets whistle and fly about,
And some die hard, and some live to fight:—**

**When statesmen wrangle, and rise to speak
The words which glitter from age to age,
And the world's divided with side 'gainst side,
And reads the papers from page to page:—**

**Or,—When music clangs in the lighted hall,
And slaves are pouring the rich, red wines,
And beautiful girls go whirling round,
With upturned faces and heated minds:—**

**When the Fall time comes, and the Spring time
comes,
And all the world is alive with joy,
And old men watch with their wrinkled smiles,
The romping girl and the romping boy:—**

**When a father leans o'er his happy wife,
With words and kisses the hour beguiles,
And the first wee babe, in her loving arms,
Looks up at the mother and smiles and smiles—
A thought like this will arise in me,
“O what must the life of an eunuch be!”**

"A rolling stone gathers no moss,"
 So we've been often told;
 And by the "moss" they mean, it seems,
 Penuriousness and gold.

But when you've gained this lauded end,
 Through hours of trial and cost,
 'Tis but to mourn in after years
 For all which you have lost.

So roll!—fair youths and maidens all—
 And grab the passing minute;
 We're all alike, tho' some will pray
 And some (I fear) will sin it.

So roll among Life's thorns and flowers,
 From hill to valley fair,
 And leave the stone to sit and rot
 With "moss" and fears and care!

LaVola's eyes are dim with tears,
 LaVola's cheeks are growing white;
 LaVola's breast is numb with fears,
 She prayeth through the night.

And dreary, dreary is her heart,
 Unlucrative her lonely bed;
 In Life she has no further part,
 Or place to lay her head.

Her pleasures have her beauty shorn,
 Both, fading like a summer's breath;
 And for her aching heart forlorn
 There's nothing left—but Death!

(Were she to live her natural time,
Nor gaze with longing on the deep,
I'd have no object for my rhyme,
So) leap, LaVola, leap!

11

Why begotten, I've forgotten—
Or I never knew.
They belie me—they decry me,
For the love of two.

I'm alive now, and must thrive, now,
And their sins abide :—
I must bear through Life their share, too,
With mine own, beside.

Were they thinking of the blinking
Brat, their love would bring?
What's the end of this pretend love—
I'm the end!—a nameless thing!

But it's done, now; all their fun, now
Culminates in me.
All unmeant for (although sent for)
I bring woe to three.

Love was thirsty; yet he cursed me—
I, who quenched desire!
She (well-knowing) kept me growing,
Hid me from my sire.

He revered me, yet he feared me,
Begged that I be slain;
But she craved me, so she saved me,
And endured the pain.

He forswore me, yet she bore me,
And am I to blame?
—When I'm older, when I'm bolder,
I may do the same.

12

Hoo, hoo! The owl says, Hoo, hoo!
The dead return to clay;
Their skulls are mottled with the dew,
And none will pray.

Hoo, hoo—hoo, hoo! The owl cries,
(He knoweth more than they)
The Priest looks down with guilty eyes
And slinks away.

Hoo, hoo! The owl's laughter tells,
The dead turn in their grave,
And none shall ring the funeral bells,
And none shall save.

Hoo, hoo!—hoo, hoo!—Hoo, hoo!—hoo, hoo!
(O Christ, away——away!)
Their skulls are mottled with the dew,
And none will pray!

13

I have no creed, I have no clan,
I have ambition, faith, nor aim;
I sing "O Glory be to God,"
Or "Nigger Joe"—'Tis all the same.

When rich, I clear my thoughts with wine;
When poor, I wash my throat with beer

(Or water); while this world goes on
The same as if I were not here.

A Baptist (early Sunday morn),
A Cath'lic (late on Christmas night),
A Holy Roller—Heretic—
Whichever offers most delight,—

I jog along from day to day
Without ambition, clan, or creed;
And only ask that on my grave
They plant the good tobacco weed.

14

And she I loved so well—is dead!
I planted roses by her head,
I planted lilies by her breast
Where she's at rest.

And she I loved so well—is cold!
They say from God I have departed;
They might have called me broken hearted
And all were told.

I softly kissed her as she slept;
It was a sad, a last farewell:
And when I heard the vesper bell
I knelt and wept.

I closed her eyes that once were bright,
And told the thrush by day to sing;
The whippoorwill I told to bring
His song by night.

And there I left her cold and still.
I could not brook what once was gay,

For all the joy had fled away
From wood and hill.

Let others censure how I live,
She'll know—(when she awakes to hear
The birds, and finds the flowers near)—
And she'll forgive!

15

Everything must have its ending,
To some point all things are tending;
And if all our hopes are mutual,
If our kisses, Sweet, prove fruitful,
Then our love must blossom soon,
Like a rose in Summer's noon!

See the brook, the stream, the river!
Always changing—quiet never;
Flowing with a varied motion
To the never dying ocean:
And as love must have its sea,
Let my heart be drowned in thee!

16

O come in the night
When the soft winds are blowing,
O come to me, Love,
When the whippoorwills sing;
O come when the brook
Is so tenderly flowing
O come when the owl
Has taken to wing.

O come when the moon
Soft is dreaming and sleeping,
When dew-laden zephyrs

37

The wood odors bring;
O come when the stars
To the Heavens are creeping,
O come in the night
When the year is at Spring!

For this is the season
And hour of wooing,
When Love her sweet mantle
O'er caution doth fling;
O come to my arms
When the night birds are cooing,
O come to my breast
And forget—everything!

17

But whisper, Love, and I will come
As fast as fast can be;
Across the blue St. Lawrence stream
I'll come, my Love, to thee.

The color, now, is on the rose,
The leaves are on the tree,
The meadow lark sings "Whisper, Love,
And he will come to thee."

The tiger lilies sing the same,
In clusters fair to see;
The brooklet sings "O whisper, Love,
And he will come to thee."

So whisper, Love, and I will come
As fast as fast can be;
Across the blue St. Lawrence stream
I'll come, my Love, to thee.

38

I dreamed of you one Summer's night,
 A dream which brought my heart much pain.
 About your head there shone a light,
 Your hair was wet with rain—

And fell in clusters on your face,
 Your eyes looked sadly 'way from mine;
 And motionless your wonted grace—
 Uncertain every line.

You spoke no word, nor yet could I;
 Great clouds were round you everywhere!
 A rain-bow held you up on high—
 Held you high in the air.

All white you were: even the flower,
 Once red, like carved ivory
 Lay in your hair; a hyaline shower
 Enrobed you tenderly.

And so you vanished in the sky,
 Without a look or sign departed;
 I could not call or speak or cry,
 But lay there, broken hearted!

I watched a little humming bird
 That speeded past from flower to flower,
 And gathered every bit of sweet
 Which lay within its power.

It whizzed now here, it whizzed now there,
 To kiss a lily or a rose;
 And every flower blushed with joy
 Its kisses to inclose.

And as I watched it flying by
So happy in its wanton play,
I thought it far—far better so,
That I should flit away,—

Than to be chained by Ellen's side,
And long for her sweet kiss in vain,
And have my patient heart be torn
And put to lover's pain.

But when I rose and ran away,
She 'gan to weep and followed fast;
And so, by seeming fickleness,
I won my Love at last.

20

Who would deprive the cedar tree
Of all its bark (or pluck a bird),
To paint it in its nakedness
And call it beautiful.—Absurd!

True beauty lies within the heart,
And modesty, is not exposed
For each of us to look upon
And jeer or praise, as we're disposed.

Yet maids we rob of every art,
Of charm, of beauty, and of grace,
And showing their infirmities
Undo all that they did with lace.

(P. S. If proper, I'd suggest
A glimpse or two, but not nudation,
For lines which vanish ere they end
Run on and on in th' imagination!)

Now who be yonder lads so fair,
 And who be yonder lads so tall;
 I know the men for miles around,
 But never saw I these at all.

And one has got his mammy's shoes,
 And one has got his daddy's gun,
 And one has got no cap or shirt
 But only half a moccas'n.

And one has got a rusty sword,
 And one has lost his powder-horn,
 And one has got a coon-skin cap,
 And one is full of "barleycorn!"

O they be sturdy Hudson lads,
 A merry lot and fair to see,
 For they will fight both day and night,
 And that right heartily.

So hoist the flag and give a cheer!
 And blow the fife and beat the drum!
 That all King George's men may fear,
 And know the Hudson men have come!

The wild wood birds are singing,
 And my Jean is singing too,
 And I send to her an answer—
 I am coming, Love, to you.

I will go across the mountains
 To an old familiar trail,
 Which will lead me to my loved ones,
 In the Mohawk's sunny vale.

For the long, long wars are over,
And the British push from shore,
But they leave their flags behind them,
Which intrepidly they bore.

And the forest birds are singing,
And my Jean is singing too,
And I send to her an answer—
I am coming, Love, to you.

23

I was a happy rural maid,
I wandered in the woodland shade,
I loitered by the meadow brook,
And read my mother's book.

My heart was happy with content,
I plucked the flowers of sweetest scent,
I wove them in my flowing hair,
Or dropped them here and there.

And then, by chance, he wandered by!
I gave him all, without a sigh!
For Nature taught no other way
In work, or prayer, or play.

And ere the stars had ceased to shine
My heart was his,—but was his mine?
Our baby's years are almost three,
But where—but where is he!

When the gentle rain exposes
 All the perfume of the roses,
 And the cuckoo bird is singing in the tree—in
 the tree,
 Then a lover is for kisses,
 And the maid wonders what this is;
 But no naughty thing she misses
 While the cuckoo bird is singing merrily—
 merrily.

Never night without a morrow,
 Never joy without a sorrow,
 And what lovers do, and whisper in the Spring
 —in the Spring
 When the hour so quickly passes,
 (And the lovely lads and lasses
 Are a hiding in the grasses),
 You would know if you knew what the cuckoos
 sing—cuckoos sing.

The rain has fallen through the night,
 The mist has risen from the stream,
 And morning brings its welcome light,
 And all the world is like a dream!

And all the world is hushed and still
 For all the world is yet asleep;
 And every pine upon the hill
 Is sunk in meditations deep.

And every bird forgets its song,
 And every cloud is tucked away,
 And every rose—where roses throng—
 Is drooping with the heat of day:

But in their dreams they hear the sea,
The distant sea, whose murmuring cry
Floats on; floats on despairingly
And tells the tale of you and me.

26

Prate not to me of law or state
Or emperor or king!
There is a power in this world
Which governs everything.

It bids a nation rule the world,
It bids a nation fall;
It subjugates our hopes, our fears,
Our virtues, sins,—our all!

It is the very bread of life,
Yet lifeless in itself;
It brings a sweet “God bless you, sir,”
Or, “Keep your stolen pelf!”

Why, even from the flame and smoke
Of Purgatory’s sod,
If you will pay the priest enough
He’ll bribe your way to God!

27

THE STRAGGLER

(With Arnold’s army on its march to Quebec.)

The stars are blown from the sky
By a blast of the cold North wind;
The snows lie massive and high,
The flakes are whirling and blind.

44

And a straggler follows the way
Through forests of ancient pine;
Whose branches tremble and sway—
Whose branches whimper and whine.

The straggler stumbles and fails,
His eyes grow watered and wild;
The pine tree murmurs and wails
With sobs of an angry child.

The snows are blinding and cold,
The winds relentless and strong;
The beasts of the wood grow bold,
At the note of the North wind's song.

The wanderer's throat grows dry,
He licks at the pure white snow;
The pine trees murmur and sigh;
The winds of the Northland blow.

The straggler sleeps at last,
He laid him down with a sigh
In the forest dismal and vast;—
The pine trees murmur and cry.

28

Dame Nature bringeth many buds to seed;
Some grow neglected, some are reared with
care,
And some are beautiful, and some are weed,
And some are common, some are sweet and rare.
Some are to gaze upon and some to eat,
And some are quick, and some are late to grow;
And so, if Nature does, is it not meet
That man should cause his seed to bud and
blow?

45

But O! what void is here of childish faces!
What barrenness of children—O what dearth!
The sin, the shame, the selfishness, embraces
Not men!—it is the women who give birth!

And if they will not that these children grow,
Then all is useless which all strong men sow.

29

The Greeks had their religion with the rest,—
The Gods of Love, of Chastity—the sea.
With many others were these people blest,
And some did good and some did wickedly.
The Germans, too, possessed their multitudes
Of Dragons, Fairies, Nymphs, and knavish
Sprites;
Who lurked in all the forest solitudes,
And hid by day but issued forth o' nights.

And we, as all the rest, must take our turn
At worship, so combine all Gods in One!
And outwardly, to His fond memory burn
A hectic taper on an etiolate stone.

While inwardly, we're worshipping the Devil,
That greatest of all Gods—the God of Evil!

30

Does Nature make two trees of equal girth,
Of height, of color, and in length of limb?
Does Nature make two mountains, of this earth,
Which are alike in base and side and rim?
Or is there anything, which we can see,
Equal to other things of its own kind?
No, no; Nature denies such liberty
Unto Herself, and more so, to man's mind.

Whether by work or fortune, or by birth,
Or luck!—the great are great, the low are low.
So it has been and will be, on this earth,
While in our veins a drop of blood shall flow.

For we are but the slaves of Destiny,
If low or great or rich or poor we be!

31

As oft we watch beside the bed of death
And count each hour ere the spirit goes,
So we observe October's wan'ning breath,
And falling petals of the wild red rose.
As oft we contemplate upon the dead,
And wonder at death's unexplained weaning,
So do we shiver at November's tread,
For things are feared which have so little meaning.

The tinted leaves now wither and drop down,
And by the winds are scattered through the air.
The wearied traveler goes by the town,
And shuns the melancholy ling'ring there.

These are the hours of uncertain state,
When Nature seems to pause and ruminate.

32

When two approach the altar side by side,
When near the priest their station they assume;
The hungry eyes of men are on the bride—
The starving eyes of women on the groom.

“She is no Virgin! I can tell you that!”
“I would not say so, but she weds for gold!”
“Her dress is pretty, but she is too fat!”
“How awkwardly her hands her flowers hold!”

Thus jealously they whisper to each other,
And organs squeak, and people watch the scene
As if these two were marching to the slaughter:
What is it all about, what does it mean?

It means she gains her freedom,—and that he,
Poor silly man, has sold his liberty!

33

You believe in the immaculate conception;
And you adhere to Adam and to Eve.
Within your mind there cannot be rejection
Of any Bible story. You believe
That from the shades of death Christ raised a
soul;
That Christ made jugs of water, jugs of wine:
That on the waves Christ took a little stroll,
And Peter sank, for lack of faith divine.

And you believe our spirits are immortal;
And you are hopeful of the Judgment-day:
And you believe in Heaven there is a portal
Of precious stones. . . . Well, all that I can
say,

Is that I don't believe these legends true,
Because in Nature I've more faith than you.

And yet some clamor “If our Faith be gone,
 What do you offer in its place?” O well,
 We offer Human Nature, whose great throne
 Comprises all of Heaven and of Hell.
 Is man so weak, so utterly debased!
 That he must ever seek a helping hand?
 When, from our minds, this weakness is effaced,
 Man on his own integrity will stand.

Is it not cowardly to shun the task
 Of carrying one’s own burden? Yet you cry—
 “O cast your burden on the Lord.” But ask
 Yourself, if this be noble, just, or high!

For the poor Lord has quite enough to do,
 Without His dragging all our burdens too.

Thou say’st to come ere Winter locks its chains
 Upon the land; while birds are singing still,
 And on each leaf Autumn hath shown its skill,
 And all things lovely are with vagrant rains,
 That soon must vanish, as the snow regains
 Its power, hiding wood and glen and hill
 Under white neatness; and redundant chill
 Encompasses the once green verdured lanes.

But know there is no outward thing impairs
 Thy loveliness and beauty—like the stars,
 Immutable with clime, or space, or year!
 Fitting to all things, and forever dear!

Whether in Winter, Summer, Fall, or Spring,
 Thou art forever fit for worshipping!

O woman, woman, lay aside your pen
 And dream of other things save fame in art.
 Leave this and all great matters to the men,
 Who are not held in bondage by their heart.
 Of Love, you dream and write lasciviously,
 Insipidating those you set a wooing.
 That, which you hint at so dramatically,
 You should not write about, but should be doing.

'Tis well you are not trusted out in life
 Or else this world were full of bastard young;
 Bred by "affinities" and amorous strife—
 And other things which I will leave unsung.

O woman, woman, lay aside your pen,
 Be what you are, and leave the rest to men.

In all men lurk the strange creative power.
 By Nature is this restless germ implanted,
 Which must break forth as seed must break in
 flower,
 Or dormant lie with all its prayers ungranted.
 Not such another joy upon this earth
 Has Nature woven in each throbbing heart,
 As to prepare a vision for its birth
 In any of the realms of mighty art!

And if some cannot write, paint or compose,
 Still, genius may be shown in more than this;
 And to these I would say, before I close,
 Acts of creation are our greatest bliss,—

Whether creating children of the mind,
 Or little children of another kind.

Then say for what is gold, if not to spend!
 If not to use, then why accumulate?
 For gold we cannot sow nor tear nor mend;
 Nor can we eat it, in its natural state.
 We cannot wear it, hear it, or employ it;
 Nor can we ever feel its magic touch
 Unless we spend it! . . . Then, we may enjoy it,
 Which none can do who have the miser's clutch.

Now clamor all—"In old age what is left;
 Where are the savings for the rainy days?"
 Of youth, of love, of sight, of taste bereft,
 What good are riches which so many praise?

Beside, if fast enough you spend your gold,
 You may be sure you never shall grow old!

O say not that the soul of man is blest!
 If, by the soul, you mean the tragic brain.
 The animal,—the good, the noblest,
 Without which all is useless, all is vain—
 Is our Progenitor, and Mother, too,
 And makes alike all people, creeds, and races;
 And knows no wrong whatever it may do,
 And proves a happy pair by happy faces.

It is the mind creates domestic strife,
 And poisons all the joy of girls and boys.
 The animal unites a man and wife,
 The spiritual their happiness destroys.

Rape, misery, theft, and suicide, you'll find,
 (Et cet'ra) are engendered by the mind.

Love is not Love which tires and grows cold
 And ebbs with the fulfillment of desires.
 Love is not Love which surfeits, or requires
 More than a tear, a sigh, to make Love bold
 (More than a shadowy form—whose robes infold
 All that which passion covets and admires—
 To be as oil upon Love's sacred fires)
 Until Love's heart is wrinkled and grown old.

Nor is true Love to worship and to dream,
 And to grow white and aged hand in hand;
 These are but love-lorn ashes which still gleam
 And glow,—ashes of Love's diminished
 brand;—

The ashes of Love's burning—flaming rod!
 Which makes of beast a man, of man—a God!

In a shop window a strange volume lies,
 Long coveted by one who walketh by
 And gazes on it with large, wistful eyes,
 And notes its price yet does not think it high.
 And now he starves and works for lucre gains,
 So he may purchase that for which he sighs;
 And now he buys it! . . . Careful of all stains,
 Or theft or harm, he dotes upon his prize!

But now that it is his, and contents known,
 He careless grows, neglectful of its worth;
 Until the pretty book (to one side thrown)
 Collects its dust, provoking tears nor mirth.

So, many amorous men with spouses do,—
 Cast them aside when they have read them
 through.

Because men fall in love and are rejected;
 Because their fortunes wither like a breath;
 And they go wand'ring sadly and dejected;
 And shoot themselves or drink themselves to
 death:

Because men fail in one thing or another,
 And seek redress in negligence of life,
 Or else abuse a sister, friend, or brother,
 And scold and beat an inoffensive wife:

Because they do all that which they should not,
 And loaf because their health is on the wane;
 And steal because starvation is their lot,—
 O never say they're weak or they're insane!

As they (for acts of knavery and abuse)
 But use Misfortune for a good excuse.

The truth of our beginning and our end,
 Is left for cool, cold science to detect.
 The myths which some deny and some defend,
 Arouse extremes; extremes expose defect.
 Although there is no God, that is no reason
 Why we should cease to strive our best to be;
 As Nature teaches us with every season,
 To gain (not lose) in our prosperity.

Too many walk this life with blinded eyes,
 And never wake from their narcotic dreams:
 They fancy harps and singing in the skies,
 And cry “ ‘Tis God who sends these Summer
 beams!”

But "God's" a word picked up and used off
hand,
Implying all we do not understand.

44

Could Love redeem itself, and I repel
Love's "morning head!"—a swindled trust-
fulness!

Could I from out my heart all things expel
That blossomed there, fed by thy tenderness:
My pen would stray thy sweetness to describe,
And write what well thou knowest to be wrong,
As one who smarts for what is still one's bribe,
As one who leaps, yet knows the Siren's song.

But should thy love return,—would I relent?
I know not! . . . Is it better to lament,
And every offer, prayer, and tear refuse,—
Or all thy wanton coggery to excuse,

And speak what fools and sages both know
well—
That paths to Heaven surely lead through Hell.

45

Now, when I sit and dream of wasted hours,
Of opportunities which have been lost;
As one who loves, but leaves the pretty flowers,
And sees them stolen by a bolder frost,
While with regret I sit and rummage o'er
Not what I've done, but what I feared to do,
Tho' I've done wrong,—O, I would do far more!
If I were young and could begin anew.

54

I would not push one spicèd dish from me,
For law or clergy or a gossip's tongue.
I do not like a starved, lean memory,
And I could say, if once more I were young,

"My conscience in a dark oblivion is,
Where he'll not meddle with what is not his!"

46

When I consider all I've gained and lost,
I cannot help but think that, as a flower
Which blooms so sweet beneath the bright,
warm shower

And dies!—nipped by the unexpected frost,—
So was my love! . . . And O the acrid cost
To view long years of joy slain in one hour!
As leaves of hope fall 'neath the cold wind's
power,

And that turns bitter which was loved the most.

But ah; in Spring the flowers bloom again!
Thus Cupid ever leads us here and there;
To bud with gladness and to droop with pain.
But if, to hope once more my heart should dare,
And once more frost should fall from the cold
sky,
I know the seed would rot—that I would die!

47

Poor William takes himself a wife
And other maids must shun.
How many had he tried through life,
Had he escaped the one!

55

I said, to the Rose,
 "Is there sorrow above?"
 And I could not believe what I heard.
 So I said to the Lily
 "O where is my Love?"
 But she answered me never a word!

Now Flossie dances wond'rous well
 Her dress a little raising,
 Yet few who look...But, if she fell,—
 How many would be gazing?

God made this world in just five days,
 The sixth day it was tested;
 The seventh day God took a rest,—
 And ever since has rested.

They wander slowly through the snow
 And stoop beneath their heavy packs;
 While one by one the falling flakes
 Cover their aimless tracks.

As oft we cry
 For sympathy,
 And friends prove cold and mute.
 So, oft we find
 Our mortal kind
 Less human than the brute.

53

Dear Lord, I ask You, grace for half
 The food that's in this basket.
 But poison, please, Bill Downey's half,
 Who's grinning while I ask it.

54

The sleepy owl cried hoo—hoo—hoo—!
 And rolled his eyes and blinked them, too;
 A blind bat flew against his wing,
 And sent them both a-tumbling!

55

They say that Christian Science folk
 Are building them a temple.
 Insane asylums they should build,
 Where room for them were ample.

56

When man has built his garden wall,
 His barn, his bridge, his house, his all!
 Nature is shocked at every line,
 And covers them with moss and vine.

57

The clouds had gathered thick and fast,
 And dark and dismal was the night:
 But lo! as morning broke at last,
 The ground was covered all in white!

58

The sun peeped down upon a glade;
 They issued from the forest shade
 Into the light,—and passed,—and then,
 Were swallowed in the wood again!

“The forest moans through all the year;
 O what, what can it be?”
 “Listen, my child, do you not hear
 The answer from the sea!”

Late is the hour and dark the night,
 And mad with pain she moans and writhes;
 Till with a sob her soul takes flight,
 And—a new soul arrives!

Trees are barren, sultry hazes
 On the hills and vales appear.
 Frogs are piping in the marshes—
 “Spring, O Spring is here!”

No music in this world so dear,
 And none such tender fancies weave,
 As on a summer’s noon, to hear
 The rain drops patter from the eave.

The raging sea moans through the night,
 The clouds conceal the Heaven’s light;
 And lo! as dawn breaks on the land,
 A body rolls upon the sand!

64

The screech owl whinnied at the moon!
The midnight thief, the sly raccoon,
Gave his reply;
And swimming to the further shore,
Rolled in the sand to dry.

65

The purple grackle has a cold,
And wheezes all the day time through;
The blue jays flutter, scream, and scold—
“Well who the Hell are you!”

66

ROSALINE

In lands beyond the deep blue sea,
There is an emerald isle;
And here are maids with merry laugh,
And maids with roguish smile,
A rose of red they often wear
Entangled in their glossy hair.

No other maids so kind and sweet!
And it is often said
They need not wear a rose, for they
Have roses just as red
Within each soft and dimpled cheek,
As one will find if one will seek.

And on this isle lived Rosaline,
Fairest! where all were fair.
Her cottage nestled by the sea,
And she was happy there;
Amid the trees and grass and flowers,
The singing birds and rustic bowers.

59

The ocean roared upon the rocks,
The spray leaped in the light;
And o'er the waters flew the gulls
With feathers blue and white;
While far away the ships went by,—
And over all,—the bright blue sky.

Here, in a vale, a village stood
In peace and quietude;
Ambition shunned this holy spot—
This growth of solitude:
And drudgery was not allowed
Among these people poor but proud.

Activity and thriftiness
Are oft misrepresented;
The very joys of toil are by
That toil, sometimes prevented:
Not many ken the simple way
To live, and learn from day to day.

These people were not wise or rich,
And little knew of gold
(That artificial scale, where pain
And joy, are weighed and sold),
They simply knew that they must live,
And took what Nature had to give.

Now Rosaline was happiest
When roving with her sheep.
She knew the spells of Hallowe'en,
And where, upon the steep,
The first blue flower of Spring-time grew,
And little else this maiden knew.

And well I know this is not much
Of wit, to recommend her,
But yet did all the joys of earth
And Heaven, itself, attend her.
She only knew what so few know—
To be content and happy so.

The Priest found little to refuse
His humble flock. 'Tis said,
That those who have not wealth, by wealth
Cannot astray be led.
And so, to keep his fold from straying,
Cost but an hour or two of praying.

And he!—the Lord of all the town,
The hills and country round,
Was friendly to the high and low
As many of them found.
So just, so good, so honest, he,
That he was steeped in poverty.

And still my Lord lived like a king,
And as a king he ruled:
To bow and to obey his word
The people all were schooled;
But he was ever suave and kind,
And of a generous noble mind.

It was a custom in this town,
A custom old you'll say,
To give each pretty bride a gift
Upon her wedding day:
A custom, you will all agree,
Begot of generosity.

And as my Lord was always poor
He little had to offer.

His every jewel of worth was gone,
And empty was his coffer.
He was so stately, poor and free,
They called him king of poverty.

And so a favor it was thought
If he would but bestow,
Upon each pert and blushing bride,
A lordly babe or so;
And as these maids in grace exceed,
You may be sure my Lord agreed.

A truely royal gift 'twas deemed,
If he was quite contented,
A bridal night to counterfeit
(If Nature, too, consented)
And gave a baby as his dower,
To show his kindness and his power.

Now Rosaline was soon to wed,
She'd promised to be true;
Yet when her Lover kissed her lips
(As all good Lovers do),
She struggled, scolded, and protested,
Most peevish when most interested.

My Lord who loved this dainty maid
Was in perplexity;
He was rheumatic, lame and old—
His age was eighty-three!
But Rosaline, in ignorance,
Trusted in his experience.

Her Lover, simple in his ways,
And in his intellect,
Was neither jealous nor surprised.

But what could you expect
Where people lived to never stray
From where their fathers lead the way!

My liberal Lord had to his score
Three hundred babes or more;
And some were males (and some were not)
And all were passing poor;
And most were like unto his Grace
(When he was young) in form and face.

But now he scratched his scanty locks,
His eyes had lost their twinkle;
Around his neck and cross his brow
Was many an ugly wrinkle:
And day by day he grew more sour,
As nearer came the bridal hour.

He had eschewed the couch of Love
For many a weary season,
Yet now the sweetest maid of all
Expected his cohesion;
And he was mortified to own
That he was weak and helpless grown.

For he was willing in his thoughts,
Which still were sensual;
But stiffness and infirmities
Made *this* impossible!
So now my Lord recursed the day
That ever his black hairs grew gray!

For sure, one must be bitter shamed
To sleep with Kate or Mabel,—
To feel their arms about one's neck
And yet—yet—not be able—:

**And, too, one loses dignity
When proved of no utility.**

**At last my Lord had found escape,
His heart was all a flurry ;
And to his castle by the sea,
He journeyed in a hurry ;
He rang the bell, and all afame
Called for the Priest, who quickly came.**

**And long they talked in secrecy,
And deeply drank of wine ;
The Priest was heard to say, "They'll call
This miracle divine,—
That God once more allows yourself
To frisk and caper like an elf."**

**What more they said there're none who know ;
But this is truth I say,
That Father John had roonish hair
And on the happy day,
When Rosaline was brought to bed,
Her babe's scant hair was fiery red !**

**But what is done and who it is
When all is dark with night,
There's none can swear,—and so my Lord
Bethought him with delight,
That tho' to a hundred he should live,
He still had wedding gifts to give.**

**Farewell to thee, Erin,
Sweet Erin, farewell !
Away and forever
From thee must I dwell ;**

Farewell, dearest Erin,
Forever farewell!

The sun lights the waves
With a luminous hue,
The heather reveals
The caress of the dew;
And the ship sails away
Through a curtain of blue.

The hours spent with thee
I can not forget.
(The price of a joy
Is a pang of regret.
When friends we must part with
No sooner than met.)

I leave thee bemoaning
Thy burden of woes.
(The price of thy Faith,—
Not the fault of thy foes,—
The fault of the Priests
And the Nuns and all those.)

Farewell, O farewell!
May thy poverty prove
A gem that will shower
Thee peace from above,—
When thy altars are purged
And thy thoughts are of love!

(Written at Sackets Harbor.)

O thou beloved waters
Ontario!—sweet waves!

Fair are thy sons and daughters,
And sacred are thy graves.

Thy shores are suave and quiet,
Where many a soldier lies,
Where once was blood and riot
And shots and battle cries.

The cannon flashed and thundered
From here to Frontenac!
The British landed—plundered!
Our fathers drove them back.

The blood was strong for battle
In glorious days of yore,
When, like a herd of cattle,
We drove them from the shore.

We!—No, not we,—our Sires!
Who fought on land and wave,
Whose memory suspires
For those they hoped to save.

69

Come hither, child, come hither. Did'st thou say
Anita was thy name, and on this day
Another year is thine? Come here I pray.

And who hath named thee so? Ah! strange
'twould be
Wert thou the child of him I loved,—but he
Is dead! . . . 'Twas long ago he went from me.

We knew one happy week and then—and then—
But why bewail the fickleness of men,
Who snatch what we shall never have again!

Thy birth-day is to day!—Strange, so is mine.
Anita, too, my name;—and it is thine!—
Why, child! thou hast his face! . . . Yes, line
for line!

And thou liv'st there, in that old mansion gray,
And thine this pony and this little sleigh,
And these thy furs! . . . Oh God, 'tis cold
to day!

O come, I pray thee; tell me what he says
Awake or dreaming,—tell me of his ways,
And if he ponders upon former days?

“I know not,” spoke the child, “But once he
said
I name thee after one who long is dead,
One, who, with pretty ways, my fancy led.

“I left her as we leave the cast off flower,
To be caressed by every wanton shower,
To smile a different smile each passing hour!”

Farewell, my child; more—more I would not
know!
Thy mother comes—(my God! I hate her so!)
Enough,—and still he dreams of me,—I'll go!

“O tell me, tell me, handsome boy,
O tell me what is in your hand;
Tell me whence your brilliant eye,
And why so blithe you walk the land!”

“I have a quill within my hand,
And ink, and reams of paper, too,
Here I stroll and dream and write,
As other poets do.”

“But you are young, my little lad,
And do not know the world’s cruel ways;
Your heart will break when all your lines
Are hung with thorny bays.”

“My dreams are sweet, my dreams are true,
And all the world will love me,
When I have written with my quill
The bonny thoughts which move me!”

And here the stranger grinned a grin,
Here he laughed aloud;
And with a long and bony hand
He pointed to a cloud.

“My lad, that yonder mass of white
Is poet of the sky,
It rises on the wind of dreams
And listlessly floats by.

“It swells with hope, ambition, pride!
And then,—grows black with fears;
And struggles with the critic blasts,
—And vanishes in tears.

“Its dying is its only worth
To the upbraiding skies.
A Poet never lives, my boy,
Until a Poet dies.

**"If you can write through scorn and skit,
Through censure and through shame;
With poverty your only friend,—
Write on, in Heaven's name!"**

**"Bastards, dolts and cut-throats, they!
Inhuman, ignorant, cruel!
As if a Poet—Nature's God!
Must learn and write by rule!"**

**"The feeling and the brain"—but here,
The stranger bowed his head,
And shook with palsy-racking shakes;
Both his eyes grew red.**

**The laddie spoke him never a word,
But looked with open eye
To see so old and gray a man
Run mad, blaspheme, and cry.**

**"If you can bare with unrewards,
And still have hopes of fame,
Nor have one penny cross your palm,—
Write on, in Heaven's name!"**

**"I will write on," The laddie said,
"I've nothing else to do,
I would be a rhyming man,
A Poet, such as you,—
And I would let them shoot me dead
For just a line or two."**

My Lord hath ridden to the hunt
 His eager hounds pursuing,
 And as he gaily wends his way
 The cuckoo bird is cooing,—
 “Coo, coo,—coo, coo!” The cuckoo sings,
 “Coo, coo, there’s mischief brewing.”

A laddie nears the castle gate
 With trappings fit for wooing;
 With scented locks and silver spurs
 And eager for the doing,—
 “Coo, coo,—coo, coo!” The cuckoo sings,
 “Coo, coo, there’s mischief brewing.”

My lady sees the lad afar!
 Her blush bespeaks her knowing:
 My Lord is riding in the wood,
 His hunting horn a-blowing,
 Nor hears the cuckoo as he sings,—
 “Coo, coo, there’s mischief brewing.”

But that exposed, is that alone
 Which sets good people stewing;
 And mischief which is never known
 Is never for the ruing,
 Tho’ cuckoo birds so often sing,—
 “Coo, coo, there’s mischief brewing.”

“O why are you so sad, Lady,
 And why are you so pale;
 The butter-cups are in the fields,
 The cow-slips, in the swale;
 And merrily sing the little birds
 By hill and dale!”

“I do not see a single flower
But droops the grave above;
I do not hear a single bird
Except the mourning dove;
And O! he sings so mournfully
About my Love.

“Deep in the wood he sits upon
The dead limb of a tree;—
The dead limb of a living ash,
And sings to the West of me:
There he sits, and there he sings
So woefully.

“And my Love has gone to hunt and fish—
Has gone into the West;
He follows the great water-ways,
The rivers of the West;—
Into the dim, dark forest land—
The forest of the West.”

“But he will come again, Lady,
Again he soon will come:
The hunter loves to have his will,
And with the birds must roam;
Yet never trail he hunts, Lady,
But leads back home.”

“Ah no! Ah no! A mourning dove
Sang in a greenwood tree;
Upon an old dead limb he sat,
And sang to the West of me;
There he sat, and there he sang
So mournfully.

“All the other boughs were green,
Save where he made his moan;
All the wood was still as death
To hear his monotone,—
And there he perched and there he sang
Alone!.....Alone!

“And so, I do not see a flower,
But droops the grave above;
And so I hear no other bird
Except the mourning dove,—
But O! he sings to the West of me,
Of my dead Love.”

73

Come all good honest Pagans
Listen unto me,
We'll join us in a merry band
And journey cross the sea;
We'll journey to an unknown land
Where one has liberty;
We're hounded, here, by law and church,
Yet they call us free!

You can not fish on Sunday,
You dare not take a gun,
(Upon this woe-begotten day)
And walk where foxes run.
For poor men, 'tis a prison,
All week they ply their hand,
And Sundays nothing have to do
But sit and curse the land.

Will this make us Christians—
This forcing us to pray,

72

And closing every public house
Along the "Primrose way!"
The sporting man is ostracized,
The "Madam" scarcely breathes;—
It only makes one curse one's God,
(If, in God, one believes.)

No betting on the races,
No fighting in the ring;
These honest, pious, Christian folk,
Put laws on everything!
The cock fight and the poker game
Are visions of the past:
One can but ponder on how long
This holy-wash will last.

They bind us, soul and body,
With a massive, heavy chain,
And whip us into "righteous paths"
And slavery again.
But this is well remembered—
When Cromwell's glory wanes,
Then Nature fumigates Herself
And Charles The Second reigns.

So come, good honest Pagans,
So come along with me,
Where one may get a Sabbath shave,
Nor shock theology.
Arise and pack your bundle,
And face your destiny,—
One cannot live in Christian peace
Where peaceful Christians be!

ELLEN DEE

Sitting beside her cottage door
One early morn in June,
Fair Ellen turned her spinning wheel
And hummed a merry tune.

Her eyes were bluer than the sky,
Her neck was round and fair;
Dimpled were her radiant cheeks,
Golden was her hair.

And down the road came Andrew lad,
To woo sweet Ellen's heart;
But knowing well what he would say,
She begged him to depart.

And sorrowf'ly he went his way
Along the Delaware,
Nor heard the twittering birds that played
And fluttered, here and there.

And down the highway rode Sir Neal
To win young Ellen Dee;
On him she gazed with tender eyes,
Yet spoke thus haughtily.

"When you have ridden to the wars
And fought against the crown,
When you have slain King George's men
By village, wood, and down;

"Then you may have my heart and soul,
And half my wealth beside,"—

Away now rode Sir Neal in haste
To fight for land and bride.

But when she heard the wars were done,
And that Sir Neal was dead
(In battle slain,) young Andrew lad
And she, were duly wed.

75

There was a minstrel from Vermont
Who sang in tones so passing sweet,
That all who heard him singing
Sat silent at his feet.

He crossed the Hudson into York,
And wandered on from day to day
Through village, town and country,
Singing his songs alway.

And so he traveled far and wide,
From gate to gate he made his way
With songs of camp and battle,
With songs of Love and play.

One night he came upon an inn,
The snows were cold and deep and white,
And bitter blasts were blowing
Through all the Winter's night.

He sang his songs beside the fire;
For one, alone, his tenor rang!
It was the keeper's daughter,
For whom he sang.

75

Unmindful of his melody,
And heeding not his look or word,
She read a book of fairies,
While he sang on unheard.

She had her book upon her knees;
She turned each page in quick surprise,
And tho' the others listened,
She did not raise her eyes.

And so he drank his pot of ale,
And turned him back whence he had come.
(None had thought to tell him
That she was deaf and dumb!)

76

September days have come,
And the leaves are turning red;
And they beat the funeral drum
From the ramparts overhead,
But his step nor eyelids fail
As from prison he is lead,—
For they're hanging—for they're hanging
Nathan Hale.

They refused the sacred book,
They refused a soldier's trial;
And his farewell lines they took,
And they burned them in a pile,
And his food was rank and stale,
But he bore it with a smile,—
Ere they hung him—ere they hung our Nathan
Hale.

Now the murderers have done
With their most ignoble deed;

76

And with saber and with gun
They go marching on the mead,
But their cheeks are ashen pale
For they know they've got to bleed,—
For the killing—for the death of Nathan Hale.

Bright was your eye and light your heart,
My Love, my tender Jane.
And O to think that we should part—
My heart is broke with pain!

My wrinkled brows and locks of white,—
My own, my Jane M'Crea!
Came in the stillness of the night
That you were borne away.

And here beneath this woodland tree,
Was drawn the murd'rous knife,
While you were dreaming dreams of me,
My Jane—my promised wife!

Gone are the dimples from your face,
And hushed your melting strain;
No more your lips shall I embrace—
My Jane—my lovely Jane!

Bereft of all the heart holds dear,
No land to call my own;
No loving arms to bring me cheer,
Dishonored and alone—

Farewell, my Jane! Farewell for aye,
And O! that we should sever—
My own—my Love—my Jane M'Crea!
Forever and Forever!

Come along, come along, my laddie,
 Over the border line;
 There's nothing in America
 For yours, my lad, or mine.

So over the border, laddie,
 Into the land of snow;
 We must away to Canada:
 Come, laddie, let us go!

We're beaten in the battle,
 The long, long war is done;
 And we were Tories, laddie,
 And now must cut, and run!

And we must cut and run for it,
 And freeze in Canada;
 We dare not own or kith or kin
 In all America.

So come along, my laddie,
 New York has cursed our kind;
 The blue St. Lawrence we must cross
 And leave our hearts behind.

First fall of snow
 On frozen ground!
 The raw winds blow
 The dead leaves round.

Cold, puffed and gray
 The clouds go by;
 And far away
 —A snow bird's cry!

One day I chanced to loiter by
 A sunny wood and woodland pool,
 Where Nell had hung her lacings high,
 And bathed and splashed in waters cool.

Away I ran in breathless flight!
 For I,—I'd not play peek-a-boo—
 (With such a bit of pink and white)
 —Would you?

How vain whate'er the heart demands;
 How vain its yearnings and its fears;
 How vain the works of human hands;
 How vain all human woes and tears!

We are no more than common clay;
 Our very life is vanity;
 It were not strange if, any day,
 The whole wide land sank in the sea.

Woman is most adorable
 Beautiful and shy,
 And somewhat similar unto
 The gaudy butterfly,—

That flits from clover leaf to leaf,
 From rosy bud to bud;
 Until, alas, one sees it light
 —Upon a chunk of mud!

How thrilling are the tender words
 "I love—I love you, Sweet!"
 When spoken by the maid adored,
 And your lips trembling meet.

I clasped her tight. "I love!" I said,
 "I love!" She said to me.
 But now I've found another mate
 —And she's found two or three!

An over timid dove, my Love,
 Your foolishness resembles,
 That wishes most what most it fears
 And loves, when most it trembles.

Now why this sigh and lethargy?
 And what this trembling hush for?
 Beware—beware, or I shall see
 There's nothing left to blush for.

My friend, you do not have to weep
 Or cry "How sweet!" or feign at fainting,
 To show that you appreciate
 A recent masterpiece of painting.

Just pick the canvas most abused—
 On which the critic's censures fall;
 Then you may rest you well assured
 That you have picked the best of all.

My Lady glided up the aisle
 And knelt before the shrine.
 And here she took her holy food
 Of bread and wine.

But as the priest breathed out his prayer
 And gave her of the dead,
 My Lady choked, and then she coughed
 And all her face grew red.

"Have courage, child," The Father said,
 In soft and priestly tone,
 "Perhaps within this food there was
 A bit of bone."

Old farmer Bruno cursed the weather
 Leaning on his hoe;
 For though 'twas getting late in June
 Not one sweet bud would grow.

And not a seed that strove for life
 But frosty weather harmed it.
 "I'm sure," said Bruno, with an oath,
 "That God has never farmed it."

The sun is under the sea,
 The moon comes out of a cloud;
 And I am thinking of thee,
 Where the waves are whispering loud.

The waves that fall and that rise,
 And foam on the pebbly shore;
 And murmur "To gaze in her eyes,
 Is to love her forever more."

They purl their melodies,
And tell how lovely thou art;
How deep the soul of thine eyes,—
But not how to win thy heart!

89

Dear Lord I kneel before thine altar
Which is ever shining bright.
Cowardice hath made me falter;
I seek thee in my plight.

Life hath proved to be the victor,
Sin (not shame) hath conquered me;
I am liar, thief, and traitor;—
Dear Lord, I come to thee.

90

If you will tell to me
How light dispels the gloom,
How leaves come on the tree,
And how the flowers bloom:
Why birds upon the bough
Sing passionately and sweet,—
Then, I will tell you how
Our lips happened to meet.

91

I've seen the moon, on stilly nights,
Arise o'er yonder meadows;
I've seen the morning sun arise
And chase the flying shadows.

But never rising moon or sun,
Or ought that mortal prizes,
Is half so fair to look upon
As Helen,—when she rises!

88

If I must go this whole life through
 With scarce a one to love me;
 I'll have the forest at my feet,
 The bright blue skies above me:—

And poetry, wine, and melody,
 And houries—six or seven—
 To help sustain me on my path
 And shorten my steps to Heaven.

Imagination purges all
 The bad, from things we cannot see;
 So that our dreams are sure to fall
 And crumble, at reality.

If Love could see things as they are,
 And not be tangled in the coil
 Of mystic moon and phantom star,
 There were no dream of love to spoil.

(But who escapes the influence
 Of such a dream, when all the power
 Of beauty, youth, and innocence
 Controls the madness of the hour.)

Who deems the stars and flowers fair.
 Come look upon my Love,
 For she is sweeter than the rose
 Or any star above.

Whoever thinks the Spring bird's song
 A pretty melody,
 Come listen while my Lady sings
 A madrigal to me.

And you who say the kiss of wine
All sorrows will remove,
Come when the moon is—I forgot,
You can not kiss my Love.

95

I dreamed of my Love!
'Twas the dream of the flowers
When Heavens above
Bring unseasonable showers.

The robins were singing,
The Summer winds blew;
And blowing, were bringing
The rain and the dew.

I woke full of yearning,
My lips all aglow;
But—well, in their burning,
They kissed but the snow!

96

Thou pillars of the church—away!
Cease thy contumely and railing.
Not one faint hope but thou would'st slay
When she is most in pain, and ailing.

There is no sin in giving birth!
If there be fault it is not *now!*
And such as she are sent on earth
To speak the shame of such as thou.

There is a story round the town
 That's whispered high and low;
 How oft to visit Adam's wife,
 The Devil used to go.

Until, one day, he leaped with rage,
 And scratched and dug and swore!
 An imp inquired for the cause
 Which made his master roar.

"I thought the leaf which Eve wore
 Was from some harmless high tree;
 But now I find she played me false,
 —For it is poison ivy!"

We bless you Adam,—first of men!
 We all adore you,—mother Eve!
 And that you ate forbidden fruit
 There's none, I'm sure, who really grieve.

For had you shunned that luscious fruit,
 And lived on roots and bark instead,
 There were no lad or lass to seek
 The mysteries of a nuptial bed.

The dawn had broken damp and chill,
 And swelling clouds enwrapped the sun;
 The phoebe's song was hushed and still,
 The snow bird's cry begun.

A lonely rose of fading hue
 Imploringly looked to the sky,
 As one by one and two by two
 The Summer birds flew by.

But when the moon pursued the sun,
So like an unpolluted bride
(Who comes—yet lingers—to be won),
—The rose had drooped and died!

100

She called me laughingly aside
To pour sweet nothings in my ear;
Then she softly 'gan to chide,
And named me Sweet-heart, Love, and Dear!

She begged I would assuage the flame
Which scorched her body through and through;
But I—I couldn't for the shame:
—Could you?

101

O say not when I come to die,
My ling'ring thoughts will turn to Heaven;
That I will look with longing eye
On all that I believed at seven.

For I would think of dance and flowers—
Of wine—of every maid I knew;
And mourn, perhaps, amid those hours,
They were so few, they were so few!

102

The dark has come, the winds are calling,
Where are your eyes to banish night?
And flake by flake, the snow is falling,
Where are your arms to clasp me tight?

Where is your voice, to banish sorrow?
And where your lips, to banish cold?

Not from your breast, I greet the morrow;
No more your charms do I enfold!

Where is your faith? Where is your blessing?
Where is the Love we followed blind?
Gone, gone—all gone! past all redressing,—
All save the fears, now left behind!

103

It is not that she's debonair,
Or that she brings an envied dower;
Or that the sunlight in her hair
Plays like a rainbow in a shower,—

That I should love so sweet a prize
And count her fairest of the fair.—
It is the Heaven in those eyes!
And the black Devil slumb'ring there.

104

And do you know where Lawrence lies,
With Ludlow at his side? . . . What!—man!
Not heard of him? . . . Then I surmise
That you are an American.

Go ask the English who he was!
The "DON'T GIVE UP THE SHIP" which
he,—
But you don't understand, because,
This tale is of your own country.

105

In the North is a white, white rose!
In the South is a rose of red!
And the Northern rose is a cold, cold rose,
But the rose of the South has bled.

So noble—so holy a hue!
As the rose of the Southern seed,
May the cold white rose of the Northland wear,
If the rose of the North must bleed.

106

I walked the fields, one early morn,
The grass was wringing wet;—
The crows were in the farmer's corn,
The hills were misty yet:

The trees were heavy with the dew,
The clouds were round and gray;
And there I found a thought of you
Which lasted all the day.

107

One little cloud within the sky!
One little boat upon the sea!
And as I watch them sailing by
I dream of her; and know that she

(So loving, bright, and young in years)
Has certain charms I'll not expose.
But some times I've suspicious fears—
Did I—I?—teach her all she knows?

108

Now that they have, with pious zeal,
Rescued these relics from the earth—
The cross—the manger,—nails and bones;
And other things of holy worth:—

I wonder when they will exhume
(And add to all this precious store)
The old, decayed, and withered leaves
Which mother Eve (and Adam) wore!

109

There are so many ways to die
Each one may choose his own.
Some cast them from a precipice,
Or knock their brains out with a stone.

And some to battle ride,—and die
Mid shouts and wild alarms;
But O to die (as oft I swooned)
Upon her breast and in her arms!

110

My heart is like the pebble, cast
Far out upon a smiling sea;
Lost in the ripples of its own—
Lost where it hoped stability!

And every tear which is concealed,
And every sigh which is suppressed,
Are so, because they cannot hope
To wake an echo in your breast.

111

If you have a varnished buggy,
And a team, and a light load;
Then from Watertown to Sackets
It's eleven miles by road.

But if you have to hoof it
When the sun is hot with smiles,
And your skin is full of lager,—
Then it's more than forty miles!

Lovely you are;
 And pure and fair.
 White are your hands,
 Soft is your hair:
 Stately to view,
 Sweet to behold;
 Why were you born
 So cold—so cold!

Like the clouds our thoughts go shifting
 Here and there, and high and low;
 Ever drifting, drifting, drifting
 Through felicity and woe.

But the end of all their trouble,
 All their happiness and pain,—
 Is to burst into a bubble,
 And to fall to earth in rain!

Mother, mother; hark O hark!
 Who is moaning in the dark?

Hush O hush; my little child:
 'Tis the storm wind growing wild.

Mother, mother; hear O hear:
 Some one is hurrying past in fear!

Hush, my darling; hush O hush!
 'Tis the dead leaf in the brush.

(Thunder cracked as lightning came,
 And the hut was wrapped in flame!)

The sailors furl the mighty sail,
 Denuded masts stand grim and tall;
 The moon surmounts its silver wall
 And glimmers pale.

A million lights spring from the street,
 Strange shadows flitter here and there;
 A beggar sings his mournful air
 In tones unsweet.

O'er minaret and citadel
 The evening chimes their sweetness shower:—
 Who'd dream, in such a place and hour,
 There was such Hell!

O take thy lips away from mine,
 They cruelly deceive;
 This sudden tenderness of thine,
 I can nor will believe.

'Tis but to rouse a jealous flame
 Within a passive lover,
 Thou would'st fictitious love acclaim
 And thus around me hover.

So take thy lips away from mine,
 I'm timorous of the morrow;
 For all the joy that would be thine
 To me were nought but sorrow.

Crumble the land,
Break on the shore,
Wash on the sand,
For ever more;

Rumble your tune,
Mirror the light
Of sun and moon,
By day and night:

Tumble and leap,
Quaver and fret!
I came to weep,
Not to forget!

The day is past and over,
The day is past and gone;
The dew has fed the clover,
The doe has fed the fawn:

The fog has kissed the mountains,
The sun has kissed the sea;
The moon has kissed the fountains,—
But you have not kissed me.

The whole day long is like the night,
The whole night long is like the day;
All stinging doubts have taken flight,
Every fear is washed away.

My doubts and fears are washed away,
And bitterness has proved untrue,
For when I turned, she bade me stay,—
Then,—O well, what *did* we do!

120

There's not a bonny bird that sings
Upon a basswood bough,
There's not a single flower that springs
With dew upon its brow;

There's not a Summer's night in June
Or wave upon the shore,—
But something in its charm, or tune,
Suggests my Eleanor.

Remind me of my Eleanor
In all their wanton play!
But she not half so faithful, or,
So true and kind as they.

121

Think not that now she smiles on him,
On you alone she smiled before.
He who demands such modesty
Is first its virtues to deplore.

Condemn her not! A prey to whims,
Dependent for each happy day—
'Tis ignorance breeds the broken heart
Untutored in a woman's way.

Go rail at fate, if rail you must!
For (was I not one of her lovers),
No woman *can* be true to one,
And *not* be fraudulent to others.

122

There's not a line in Nature
But springs from beauty's womb.
The moon beams are but lullabies
Which birds, at day, resume.

Loveliness is everywhere,
And dainty melody;
But no such beauty anywhere
As in your face to see.

Beneath your drooping lashes
Your soul is all afire,
And not a glance, but flashes
The depth of your desire!

123

O! fatal—fatal Brandywine!
How frail thy hopes, O Liberty!
They reel—they stumble, line on line,
And flee! And flee!

Precipitated in retreat
They fly the blood-besmattered sod;
How *must* the loved ones bear defeat—
O God! O God!

124

It is innate to seek,
To venture and explore.
What joy to scale the peak
Which none have scaled before.

But having won success
Where none have won but you,
Is—well, to once possess
A Virgin, and—adieu!

125

I dreamed that I was Orpheus,
And that I sang so wond'rous well
I held the very rocks and trees
Beneath my spell.

But tho' I charmed the very sea!
I could not strike a single tone
To charm my Love! Her woman's soul
Was harder than the stone.

126

This is the way the story goes
(And one perhaps you've heard,)
About a husband and his wife
Who watched a strutting bird.

"You are not half so kind to me"
She said, "for all your bluster,
As to that flock of silly hens
Is that decrepit rooster."

"I know it, Dear," (he blandly smiled)
"I am a fool; but then,
The rooster has variety
And not the same old hen."

127

Your love was like a rose
That buds within a night;
So fragrant—passionate!
So happy and so bright.

The petals, one by one
Fell lifeless at my feet:
It was so like a rose,
As thoughtless and as sweet.

So like that blushing flower
Whose life is sped so fast,—
It was too beautiful,
Too sweet, too pure to last!

128

"When Death's dark stream I ferry o'er
 (A time that surely shall come,)
 In Heaven itself I'll ask no more
 Than just a Highland welcome."

But—

S'pose you break your windward oar
 (A chance, to Poets, risky,)
 In Hell itself could one ask more
 Than just some Highland whiskey!

129

I would not call you back again
 Now you are gone away;
 I was not for your happiness,
 I ever made your pleasure less
 From day to day.

It was mad youth and kisses, Sweet,
 That were to blame;
 Yet if our loving so were sin,
 There never, never yet has been
 A holier shame.

130

They say the world must come to end
 Through ice or fire or rain;
 But this is foolishness, my friend,
 As I will now explain.

The world must come to end, that's true,
 People will cease to be:
 But this will only happen through—
 Well, through sterility.

131

The sky is dull and black, and drizzling rain
 Falls on the tree tops and the vales and hills.
 The Autumn leaves have fallen on the lane,
 And man sits brooding on his countless ills:

He thinks of flowers gone, and rotted fruit,
 Amid the drizzle of the steady rain.
 O man is such a silly, stupid brute,—
 As if the Summer would not come again!

132

I know a bush where once there bloomed
 The first red rose of June;
 And all around were butterflies,
 Just broke from their cocoon.

And here my Love and I had walked
 And named our wedding day;
 But now the bush is cut,—and we?
 Have each gone on our way.

133

The broken heart of any rose
 Wants not the transient, loud lament,
 To which a shallow soul gives vent
 Its sorrows to disclose.

So if you pass a rose, somewhere,
 And see it droop, about to die,
 Weep not, nor speak, nor loudly cry,—
 But sprinkle water there.

The Indian Clock sang four sweet notes;
 And I would hunt the doe and fawn,
 So I arose and smoked my pipe,
 And waited patiently for dawn.

* * * * * *

I waited long and restlessly
 Before the gray hawk soared and cried,—
 'Twas three when I was first awake!
 The Indian Clock had lied.

(This bird, called the Indian Clock by the woodsmen, is thought to tell the hours of night—after twelve—by the number of notes it sings.)

How joyously one seeks the wave
 And swims the hours away,—
 The sticky, hot, and humid hours
 Of a mid-summer's day.

Refreshed and cool one dives and dives,
 And swims from shore to shore.
 But one must dress at last,—and then,
 One's hotter than before!

Each evening a whippoorwill
 Comes at the self-same hour,
 And sings beneath a lilac bush,
 A bush that's all a-flower.

He sits upon the self-same stone
Beneath the lilac tree,
And with the odor of the flowers
Mixes his melody.

The lilac bush is all a-flower!
And as he sings his tune
(Picking its way amid the stars)
Wanders the moon.

137

If you will wander in the wood
When April melts the ice and snow,
And watch the early buds of Spring
That everywhere begin to grow;

And see them drink the sun and rain,
Of which they dreamed the Winter through:
Then you will know how all *my* dreams
Have been fulfilled in you.

138

YORKTOWN.

The blood of war no longer runs;
The doleful days of strife are o'er,
The popping of the murd'rous guns—
The smoke and battle's roar!

Lonely the mother waits to press
The sire—the children which she bore,
And dons her most becoming dress
—Which they will praise no more.

And ah! the youngest of them all,
The flaxen haired—the favorite son;
But twelve years old, and five feet tall,
—They might have spared the one!

139

Go plant the seed and grow your flowers,
And toil to make them fair;
And guard them through maternal hours
With unremitting care.

No sooner grows the lovely rose
By castle or by cave,
Than with some lover off it goes
Or drops into the grave!

140

The dog-apple is red with bloom!
Black River's bank is lined with it;
And there we'll wander hand in hand,
My Love, if you've a mind to it.

The logs are running down the stream,
The sun is radiant above;
And we shall pass the day in dreams—
Such dreams as come with Spring and Love!

141

The hermit thrush is singing, Love,
Is singing near and far;
And over yonder mountain top
I see one star.

One venturesome star that rises high
Above the forest bowers,
And tells that soon, ah! soon, my Love,
Our nuptial hours.

142

I gazed from my window on hollows and rills,
 When Nature was happy with smiles;
 The sun threw its splendor on valleys and hills,
 That rolled on for miles and miles.

I creep to my window, the moon shining bright,
As the dew and the night mist appears,
 And find Nature weeping alone in the night—
 —I'd looked on a valley of tears!

143

I gaze across the terrace
 Upon the threat'ning night;
 The sky is thick with rain, and not
 A star, to show its light.
 A distant flash and rumble
 Across the lake's still air;
 And long I look as if the storm
 Could tell me where—where—!

144

I dreamed a dream . . . Quebec of old
 Hung o'er the river,—strong and bold;
 And, round about, her palisades
 Were manned by many strong brigades.

But I awoke!—Wolfe and Montcalm
 Are dead!—and sleep 'neath oak and palm;
 While sniveling half-breeds kneel and pray
 Beneath the Pope's dogmatic sway!

145

A pewee sings each evening
 And morn, beneath my window sill;
 And wakes in me the memory
 Of clover field and wooded hill.

But that was long,—so long ago!
I know the woods have been cut down,
I know the fields are full of briars
Around that little country town.

146

A tree toad has been singing
A day or two in vain,
But well I know tomorrow
It's going to blow and rain.

I know it, by his singing,
And by the blue jay's scream,
That it will rain tomorrow,
And pour down in a stream.

147

There's not a brook to flow;
There's not a rose to spring!
The wintry winds and snow
Have frozen everything.

The brooding hills beyond
Are covered all with white;
The ice is on the pond,
And groans and cracks at night.

And, drooping with the snow,
There sleeps a cedar tree
(Where a titmouse sings)—and oh!
How sweet its dreams must be.

102

I will build me a home in the forest,
 In mountains of shadowy pine.
 In the rocks I will hew me a grotto,
 In the grot I will build me a shrine.

I would count every star in the Heavens,
 And know every leaf in the bloom;—
 I will build me a home in the forest,
 And there I will find me a tomb!

Born of the stars and moon, He comes!
 And with a wond'rous key
 Unlocks the portals of the South,
 And sets the flowers free!

Unlocks the Heavens and the earth!
 And then away is flown.
 And how the waters leap and fret—
 How the pine trees moan.

If one warm breath of early Spring
 Can wake the flowers in their bed,
 (Which have so long been slumbering
 That we forgot they were not dead)—

It is not strange a melody,
 Or distant odors of a pine,
 Can waken, with their harmony,
 Red roses in this heart of mine!

The wood-pecker goes rap—rap—rap
 On the resounding log;
 And echo answers tap—tap—tap—
 Across the drowsy bog.

The partridge sends his drum—drum—drum—
 Along the leafy way;
 The honey bees go zum—zum—zum—
 For 'tis a Summer's day.

The sky is over-clouding fast,
 Dark has grown the day;
 Tangled in a sweeping blast,
 The dead leaves whirl away.

Bolts of lightning dart and flash,
 Thunders echo loud,
 And down the mountains roll and crash!
 —And rain bursts from a cloud!

The wind is singing to the pine,
 The wave is singing to the sea,
 And with her little hand in mine
 She sings to me.

She sings a song whose melody
 Is sweeter than the woodland showers;
 And as she sings, it seems to me
 The world is ours!

They wander'd through the forest depths,
 By mountains, streams, and beaver plains;
 At night they built a hemlock hut
 To shelter them from rains.

And when the moon peeped through the door,
 And filled the night with silvery charms,
 It found his head sunk on his breast,
 And she within his arms.

Frost-bitten morn, and rising sun!
 And not a cloud within the sky.
 O! beautiful to gaze upon
 The forests, from a mountain high!

How perfect every tree and lake
 And brook and stump and stone!
 When all the world is far—far—far—
 And one is in the woods alone!

A mist is on the mountain side,
 A mist is round the moon.
 The trees are barren, cold, and still,
 The snow is coming soon.

The cold white snow is coming soon
 With sharp and bitter blast!
 But, Love, you should be used to this,
 —You're eighty three—or past.

